# THE GREAT OBLATION

BY THE

REV. W. BRAMLEY-MOORE

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St. Cuthbert's Church, Gerrards Cross, Bucks.

# THE GREAT OBLATION;

OR,

## A Plain Inquiry

## INTO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT AS THE EFFICIENT MEANS OF TAKING AWAY HUMAN SIN.

BY THE

REV. W. BRAMLEY-MOORE, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE SIX SISTERS OF THE VALLEYS,"

INCUMBENT OF GERRARD'S CROSS, BUCKS.

"Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." THE MASTER.

LONDON:

WILLIAM MACINTOSH, 24, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1864.

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TO

The Parishioners of Gerrard's Cross,

THESE PAGES,

REPRODUCING (FOR THE MOST PART)

DOCTRINES EXPOUNDED TO THEM FROM THE PULPIT

CONNECTED WITH

CHRIST'S ONE GREAT OBLATION OF HIMSELF,

("THROUGH WHICH ALONE WE CAN OBTAIN

REMISSION OF OUR SINS,

AND ARE MADE PARTAKERS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,")

Are affectionately Dedicated,

WITH SINCERE DESIRE FOR THEIR FURTHERANCE AND JOY

OF FAITH,

BY THEIR FRIEND AND MINISTER,

THE AUTHOR.

LATCHMOOR,
*Easter*, 1864.

702394

# PREFACE.

The author hopes that the following pages will meet with the approval of his clerical brethren, as being an effort to expound the great principles of the Atonement in a plain and popular manner. The subject, which has long been the battle-ground of sects and parties, is one of difficulty, and unhappily is now the theme of grave contentions even "among ourselves." He has desired to shrink from no view of the subject because of its difficulty; but he trusts that his readers will find the great principles he has set forth, agreeable to the unity of the faith, the standard of the word of God, and the formularies of the Church of England. He humbly ventures to remind his clerical brethren, that as St. Paul went about preaching one absorbing truth, "Jesus Christ and him crucified," so should all spiritual overseers desire before all things to "teach and preach Jesus Christ"

(Acts v. 42; xx. 20, 21; Col. i. 28) and labour to ground their flocks in the way of salvation. This is the one grand subject which we are bound to teach in our pulpits, in our national schools, in the cottage, and at the bedside; for it is the basis of individual happiness, of national regeneration, of acquittal in the day of judgment, and of the eternal praises of Heaven. Whenever we meet a human being we meet with one personally interested in our subject. Should these pages stimulate any teacher in his great work, or assist any of the taught, whether old men or children, to clear views on this vital and personal subject, the author will receive his reward, and thank God for the honour of doing aught to promote that cause which will triumph over all, and which, though entrusted to earthen vessels, *needs* not the feeble help which is graciously associated with its ultimate and infallible triumph.

May God the Holy Spirit take of "the things of Christ and show them unto us." May He "open our understandings that we may understand the Scriptures," and believe to the saving of our souls.

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## GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENT.

### INTRODUCTION.

Proof of the importance of the subject—The meaning of Atonement—The difficulties in the way of an Atonement arise from God's Holiness, Truth and Justice—Explanation of some of the principles of Justice which bear on the inquiry.

### PART I.

RELATIONSHIP.

The first point which Justice requires is Relationship—It requires that the Saviour must be connected with the sinner, and rejects the blood of bulls and goats as worthless—Justice requires that the same nature that sinned should suffer—Relationship requisite for the kinsman's right—Why Christ's Atonement does not profit the Angels—The principle of Representation considered and illustrated from the law of Moses—A statement of the doctrine of Christ's two natures.

### PART II.

REPARATION.

Justice requires a two-fold Reparation in kind and degree—Reparation in kind for Adam's sin—Explanation of terms and of the idea.

(1) Adam's self-exaltation must be balanced by Christ's self-humiliation.

(2) Adam's want of confidence in God must be balanced by Christ's life of faith.

(3) Adam's disobedience must be balanced by Christ's obedience unto death.

The question of degree—

The degree of man's guilt is from the human level to that of the Divine Nature—The Reparation must measure the same interval, and will be incomplete if it reaches only to some level between the two extremes.

## PART III.

### OBEDIENCE.

Obedience considered as a positive debt due to the law, on its own claims, to fulfil its requirements and earn its reward.

## PART IV.

### SUFFERING.

Suffering is the result of sin, and is the penalty of the law—What the penalty of the law is—It is sorrow, pain, and death—Whether spiritual and eternal death form part of the direct threat of the law in the first instance—Christ's sufferings, in mind, and body—The justice of the innocent suffering for the guilty considered.

Further inquiries—

(1) Whether Christ bore the special sins of individuals.

(2) The manner in which this might be accomplished.

(3) The amount of his suffering.

(4) The extent of his Atonement.

(5) Whether the sinner's condemnation is a second payment of justice

(6) Eternal death the consequence of rejection of the Gospel.

## PART V.

### HOLY SUFFERING.

The quality of Christ's sufferings considered—That which would purge others from sin, must have no sin of its own—Illustrated by the law of Moses.

Christ's perfect holiness—

In nature,
In act,
In word,
In thought,
} towards God and man.

This moral purity gave the required quality to his sufferings.

## PART VI.

### MERIT.

Merit is opposed to duty—No creature can have merit before God—But Christ, being God, can have merit—The services which Christ rendered to God, for which He claims his reward, as a matter of right.

(1) He vindicated God's character and glorified his law.
(2) He developed the new attribute of grace.
(3) He presented God with a Redeemed Church to praise and worship Him.

God acknowledges Christ's merits and has promised to reward Him for his meritorious humiliation and obedience unto death—Without this element all the previous ones are valueless.

## PART VII.

### AUTHORIZATION.

Persons must have a rightful authority for any special work or their acts may not be valid—God has appointed Christ to his office as a Saviour and made Him his Prophet, Priest, and King—All that Christ does bears the stamp

of God's authority, and the Supreme Judge consents to accept his sufferings and death, as a satisfaction to the law, and an expiation of sin.

## CONCLUSION.

Recapitulation of the previous elements—They form an Atonement of absolute perfection—Our duty is, not to try to improve it or add to it, but to accept it freely.

The pleas of the natural heart refuted—

1. Repentance will not save us.
2. Nor prayer.
3. Nor the plea of our having done no harm.
4. Nor the fallacy that we have done our duty.
5. Nor the mercy of God, apart from Christ.

# COLLECTS.

GRANT, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

# THE GREAT OBLATION.

## INTRODUCTION.

My dear Friends,

1. When I have been visiting among your cottages, or have attended the bedside of any who have been sick, and have spoken to you about the concerns of your souls, I have generally found how few there were amongst us who could explain the way by which they hoped to be saved; and this must be a grief to one whose duty it is to plead with you on your souls' behalf in Christ's name. The reason of our ignorance

is plain. It is because we have sinned and fallen away from God. In support of this I may quote many passages of Scripture, and ask you to look out the following: Isa. i. 3, 4; Col. i. 21; Jas. iv. 4.

But I can say no more upon this head, as I wish to keep to one point in the following pages, and we cannot explain everything in a little book; and sometimes a great book frightens people, and they will not read it because it requires too great an effort. Imagine when you take these pages up that you are listening to the voice of a friend, whose tones will never vex you, but who will be glad to preach to you silently in your own homes for a long time. St. Paul said (Rom. x. 1), "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to

God for Israel is, that they might be saved." This is the wish of the Christian minister, who is trying to gather out of the world God's elect people, who are to be to the praise of the glory of Christ's grace in the last day.

A great and good work reflects credit on those who do it, in like manner as our beautiful Church (whose picture I have put at the beginning of my book, so as to give it more favour in your eyes) is a praise to those who erected it and gave us such a free and noble gift.

So Salvation is a great and good work; yea, the very chief of God's works, and the angels will shout for joy when it is finished, when all Christ's saved people stand before his throne, forming one perfect ran-

somed body—"a GLORIOUS church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27). It is for this great end that Christ's servants are labouring upon earth, and that I write these few simple pages, hoping that God the Holy Spirit, who uses the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, may make them useful to many persons to the glory of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ his Son our Lord.

Nor do I write only for the poor here and elsewhere, but for the rich as well; some of whom, though they may have houses and lands, and read the new and clever books that come every day from the press, could not, perhaps, explain how they must be saved. Many of them, I fear, would

not give the right answer; they would be mixing up their supposed good works with those of Christ, and this, as I shall try to show, will not avail. And as they are more jealous of being reminded about their souls, though they are in the same need and danger, perhaps some of them will read this book, and derive good from its simple pages. This is my desire, for the rich as well as for the poor, who are all equal in the sight of God.

Now first let that growing lad reach down yon Bible, which if it be not covered with dust, is perhaps because so many other books are on it, and let him open it and show his father and mother how well he is learning to read at the National School; let him look out a text

when we come to one, and read it out in a loud clear voice, so that grandfather, although he may be somewhat deaf, may hear and understand also.

My friends, in the following pages I have endeavoured to do more than simply say, We must believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved; I have tried to explain how it is that He is the very Saviour whom we need, and to give a few reasons, which all who *think* may understand, why his BLOOD is able to cleanse us from all sin. This will make the anxious soul feel more peaceful when it perceives more and more clearly on what a solid, safe foundation its hopes rest. I want to explain to you the glorious truth of the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN

THE REMISSION OF SINS, and how He is a JUST GOD and yet a SAVIOUR.

Now I shall be very plain, for I will think of the child and the dying man; not one hard word will I use if I can help it; still there are some few which I cannot help; but though I shall use simple words, I shall try to convey THOUGHTS; for what I desire, God helping, is to get you to think for yourselves and to stir up your minds (2 Pet. iii. 1), and thus perhaps I shall do a little good. Let me then ask you to read my book very slowly, and never skip one word until your mind can see exactly what it means. Do not despise the words because they are short and simple, for simple words may convey deep thoughts. Some of the greatest truths and grandest

thoughts are clothed in very short words. (See Gen. i. 3; Psa. civ. 1—4; cxix. 68; cxlvii. 4, 5; Isa. xliv. 8; Luke xix. 10; 1 John iv. 7—11; Rev. xxii. 1—5.) We must be careful to weigh the *thoughts* themselves, apart from the words which convey them, for the reasons of a thing may want a good deal of attention, although the words are plain and easy. Now, I have tried as much as I could to find simple reasons and easy words, asking myself if I think the man who breaks stones on the road will be able to understand what I mean if he reads my book, and I have tried to choose every word, so that we may have clear thoughts when each word carefully sets forth its own special thought, for which it stands as the sign.

For surely there can be no greater honour than to bring truth within the grasp of the most uneducated. If this be a triumph of mind in any subject, how much more so is it in things which belong to the salvation of the soul, and therefore the Bible is written for the peasant as well as for the king. St. Paul gives us very good advice when he says (1 Cor. xiv. 9, 19): "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

Though I cannot explain to you

HOW the holy child, Jesus, was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary; *how* the two natures of God and man are joined together in only *One Person*; *how* the Redeemer could bear all the sins of all men on the Cross; still, perhaps, I may be able to suggest reasons *why* these things must take place if Christ would become our Saviour. God has given me my mind, and I not only may, but ought to use it, when the question is asked, "What must I do to be saved?" We shall thus see that though we can do nothing without FAITH, still that faith, though it outsteps reason, is not contrary to it, and that reason is a very useful friend to faith; for it makes the faith intelligent, and therefore *strong*. You know it is written that "the heart of

the righteous studieth to answer" (Prov. xv. 28), and that we should be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a REASON of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. iii. 15).

Importance of the subject.

2. It is a common practice, when we consider any subject, to show at the outset its importance; but, as you already profess to believe in God and in his holy Word, you may well excuse me saying much on this point. I will, however, just bring it before you in a few words, to convince you of its very great importance.

The Atonement of Christ is called in Scripture the mystery which from the beginning of the world has been hidden in God, but is now made manifest; and we are told that in

it are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Eph. i. 9; iii. 9; Col. i. 26; ii. 3). Well, then, may it command our deep attention for its own excellence, as well as for the personal relation which it bears to each one of us. When Moses and Elias once came back to earth from the unseen world to do homage to our Saviour on the Mount of Transfiguration, it might have perplexed us to guess the subject of their conversation. No trifling subject could interest bright spirits from the other world. What worthy of the attention of three such persons, of whom the Master Himself was one? Had we not been told, how anxious we should have been to know! how we should have wearied ourselves in thinking, and how fruit-

less our thoughts would have been! "They spake of his decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke ix. 31). Their conversation was about the *death* of Christ—that glorious fact, through faith in which Moses and Elijah had themselves been saved.

Again, our earthly minds might be unable to conceive the subject of heaven's songs and praises. What could cause another thrill of joy throughout the bright ranks of the angels of God? We are told what they sing about; it is the same subject concerning which Moses and Elias spake, the death of Christ. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing"

(Rev. v. 11, 12). Seeing, then, that this truth is held in such esteem in heaven, should not we sinners, who are so deeply interested in this fact, direct our thoughts to it, so that we may understand and admire its beauty more and more?

And may God the Holy Ghost give us a right understanding in all things to his glory and our spiritual benefit! May He give us knowledge to enable our heads to *think*, and grace to enable our hearts to *feel* (Eph. i. 15—18).

Atonement: what it is.

3. A few words as to what is meant by Atonement. It means a sacrifice offered up to God on account of sin, which sacrifice involves the forfeit of a life and the shedding of blood. Atonement implies the existence of God, who is a Judge

and a King, and who has given a law enforced by rewards and penalties; it implies further the existence of sin, and its object is to afford satisfaction to the broken law for sin, and thus do away with or atone for the sin. We do not think that God loves us because Christ died for us, but that Christ died for us because God loved us. But still we are justified in considering Christ's atonement as that which disarms God's wrath, and allows Him to show forth his mercy and grace without damage to his holiness, truth, and justice.

The word "Oblation," which is the title of my book, has something of the same meaning. It is anything *offered* up to God, and the Great Oblation, which Christ offered

up to God, as we shall see hereafter, was HIMSELF.

Its difficulties.

4. We pass on to consider the difficulties which lay in the way of an atonement. These arose from the character of God. There are three attributes which, at first sight, seem to render an atonement impossible, and yet these are the very ones which would most rigorously exact it, supposing one possible.

Holiness.

5. There is the HOLINESS of God, which presents a difficulty in the way of man's salvation. Holiness is the sum of God's character and includes all his excellencies. In one word, it is his love of RIGHT and abhorrence of wrong, his close union with GOOD in all forms, and his separation from EVIL. It leads

Him to do always what is right, or good. It includes other excellencies, such as truth and justice, and insists on their full action. In this case, then, holiness would present great difficulties in the way of man's redemption, and if it were otherwise, then holiness were no more holiness.

Truth.

6. Secondly, a difficulty arises from the TRUTH of God, which is infinite. Truth is that quality which makes God upright, that He cannot deceive nor break his word, but must do what He has said He would. It makes Him keep his promises, and therefore He is a "God that cannot lie" (Titus i. 2); for He is not "a man that He should lie, neither the son of man, that He should repent." God said to Adam, "in the day that thou

eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This was a threatening, or a verbal pledge to a certain course of conduct, which He was therefore obliged to follow out. He said man should die if he sinned: man sinned, then God would not be true if He was not to execute his threat. Here, then, was another difficulty in the way of man's redemption, through the action of God's truth.

Justice.

7. But, thirdly, there is another attribute which is much concerned in the work of an Atonement, and that is God's JUSTICE.

As it is with this attribute that we shall have most to do in the following pages, I will say a few words on some of its principles, which may help us to understand its nature more fully.

Justice is the name for one of God's moral attributes, which in plain language means a fixed disposition of mind, prompting to a certain course of conduct. It is concerned with what is just, and right, and equal, and this is why Justice is represented by a female figure with these peculiar marks. She has a bandage over her eyes, to show that she is impartial; that is, blind to the rank and gifts of those whom she will judge; she has a pair of balances in one hand, to show that her dealings are equal, that she will give to all their due and their rights, but nothing more; and she has a sword in the other hand, to show that she will not spare, but will inflict punishment on those who have broken any of her laws.

8. Let us take the idea of equal; we may illustrate its meaning in the simplest manner. Suppose that some great balance were suspended in the air, whose scales were so equal in weight that they remained exactly on one level. If something be put into one scale, it becomes loaded, and sinks, while the other scale, being now lighter, rises. The balance has been disturbed, and is now uneven. What must be done to restore it to its first condition? Why, we must put into the opposite scale a weight exactly as heavy as that which has upset the balance, and then its scales are made even or equal once more. Let us apply this to God's treatment of his creatures, for "by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. ii. 3), and to this

The balance.

Job referred when he cried (Job xxxi. 6), "Let me be weighed in an even balance." (See also Psa. lxii. 9; Job vi. 2; Dan. v. 27; Rev. vi. 5.) The weights that God's justice puts into the balance are GOOD and EVIL; those who are good and do good shall get good, and those who are evil shall receive evil.

"Are not my ways equal?" saith the Lord. And this is the very meaning of the word "equal" in that eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel (Ezek. xviii. 25—29).

We reap what we sow.

9. How often is the truth set forth in Scripture that what a man sows, that he shall reap! As it is a principle in nature that like produces like (Matt. vii. 16—20), so is it in the spiritual world; happiness

is the fruit of holiness, sorrow is the law of sin, and what Divine justice has joined together none can put asunder.

Suppose that you sow a field with barley, or oats, or wheat. What do you expect to find there in the time of harvest? The same sort of grain that you sowed. You expect to reap barley, and not thistles when you sowed barley; you expect to reap wheat, and not tares when you sowed wheat; but, if you sowed docks, or couch-grass, or nettles, then, if you were in your senses, you would not expect to find in autumn a fine field of waving yellow corn. So it is with ourselves: if we do what is *good*, we shall (through the merits of Christ, for it is now a reward of grace, and not of debt)

receive what is good; and, if we do what is evil or wrong, we shall receive or suffer evil. Of course we are now talking of the nature of justice and its action, and I trust I have said enough to make its meaning clear; nevertheless, just let the little one who is reading this aloud look out Rom. ii. 6—10, and Gal. vi. 7, 8.

Observe: God says He will give to all their due; He will treat all according to their works; the good man shall have good given to him, and the evil man, evil; in other words, He will reward the good and punish the wicked.

To refer to our former figure: When a man sins, one of the scales of justice goes down, for his sins, which are evil, make it heavy; then

equity requires that an equal amount of personal evil (or suffering) should be measured into the other scale, and given to the sinner. This quantity, whatever it may be, is SATISFACTION. When this is done then JUSTICE is satisfied, and the balances are equal.

This principle is well expressed in the law of Moses, Exod. xxi. 23—25; "And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life; eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot; burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." It gives like to like, in other words, that which is due to a person. It is stern, unbending, exact, and knows neither grace nor privilege. It was glorified when Satan, who kept not his first estate,

was cast out of heaven, and the remaining angels sang praises to God, crying, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The same attribute exacted man's punishment. How could it be satisfied? How could God be true and yet pardon sin? This was what none in heaven, or in earth, could have told. Well might the sinner be afraid of the justice of God, for it is his natural enemy, and this may be a reason why so many still feel a secret unbelief, as if they had a misgiving as to how justice is satisfied in Christ's atonement, and whether there are not now some arrears to be claimed from them or some one else. God grant that we may set before them the finished work of their Divine Surety, the man Christ Jesus!

Let us place these three attributes together, that it may help us to remember them.

HOLINESS
TRUTH
JUSTICE
} Present great difficulties in the way of an atonement for human sin.

10. My brethren, some of us think very little of these great difficulties, and are almost wearied in hearing about the simple way of salvation. But remember that many things appear easy after they have been often explained, which would have completely baffled us in the first instance. You hear of this from youth, you receive it as a commonplace, you do not grasp the many and mighty truths which lie hidden in the simple, yet sublime fact of God manifest in the flesh, and for this reason "the preaching of the

The question was too difficult for the angels.

cross is to them that perish foolishness" (1 Cor. i. 18). To put the case before us in a clear light: Suppose that all the archangels of heaven had been gathered into one large assembly, and that the question had been asked them, "How can sinful man be just with God?" What would they have answered? Would they have understood the question? Certainly, for as the angels excel in strength (Psalm ciii. 20), so do they in knowledge, and, compared with us, are as vessels of gold to vessels of clay, their nature being very superior to ours. But what would they have done had that question been asked them? There would have been silence in heaven,—not one of them would have answered a word. Would you know the reason? Be-

cause the question was too wonderful for them; they could not find it out. They would be silent, not because they did not understand the question, but because they did understand its difficulty, and knowing the nature and demands of the holiness, truth, and justice of God, they could suggest no possible means whereby the sinner might be saved, the law satisfied, and God's character glorified. This, then, may show us the great difficulty of saving sinners, as well as the great mystery of the plan; and if that scheme be now simple, the greater praise to that glorious wisdom which contrived the plan, and made it so simple and easy as to be within the reach of all. "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of

God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counseller? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 33—36.) Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. JUSTICE itself is our friend, through the cross of Calvary. We shall now endeavour to prove this point, to show how Justice has received an absolute satisfaction in Christ's obedience unto death, that the very uttermost farthing of man's debt has been paid, so that we may lift up our heads with joy, and cry,

(Ps. xcviii. 1—3), "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Cor. xv. 57.)

# PART I.

## RELATIONSHIP.

"It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren."

11. Relationship. I NOW bring before you the first point which must form part of an atonement for human sin. I will express it under one word, although it is a long one—it is RELATIONSHIP. This means that, whosoever will be our Saviour must be related to us; that is, he must be of the same nature as ourselves. Sameness of nature or relationship, I say, is necessary in the person who would be our Saviour. Now, do you ask

why this is so? You are right in asking if there are good reasons why this must take place, and I will try to give you some token from the nature of justice why it must be so, and I shall try to prove the point from the Bible. But remember what I said before—God forbid that we should dare to ask HOW it was that the Holy Ghost wrought in the Virgin Mary, or HOW the Lord was made of a woman and yet born without sin,—these are mysteries which to try to explain would savour of blasphemy. You know that there are so many mysteries about ourselves that we must not be surprised if we find some about God. A poet tells us that—

"The greatest mystery to man is man."

We cannot tell how our soul dwells

in our body, and how it telegraphs from the brain to the hand or the foot to do its will. We think, we speak, we walk, we labour; but HOW we do these things the cleverest man is not able to teach us any more than the child. We know that these things are so, and we accept them as facts, although we cannot explain the way in which they are done. So with Christ we accept the fact of his taking upon Him human nature (which put into one word is INCARNATION, or being made flesh, or man), and though we dare not try to explain how God's power and wisdom did this wonderful thing, still there is nothing wrong in our trying to see the good reasons of the fact, and why it could not be otherwise. This will make us praise God, both

with our heads and hearts, when we can give a clear statement of the truth we believe, and feel its power in our inmost souls.

The Saviour must be connected with the sinner, or He cannot profit him.

12. Consider, then, one simple reason why Christ should be made a man. He must take our nature in order to be CONNECTED with us. Things must be connected with one another to have any mutual influence for good or bad; for, if they have no connection at all with each other, then they cannot affect each other, either for good or evil.

We may admire Captain Speke's tact, courage, and patience as he travelled among the savage tribes of Africa, yet it makes no difference to us whether the river Nile rises north or south of the equator, or in this or

that lake. Yet we should all be interested if we were to go to war with France, for our taxes would get heavier and our food dearer, and these things are *connected* with ourselves.

Just in the same way many of us are sorry (not that our sorrow is either deep or lasting) when we read of the two thousand poor women who have been burnt to death in the church of the Jesuits at Santiago, in Chili, which took place December 8th, 1863; but any mother among us would feel deeper and more lasting sorrow if her little child were brought home with a broken arm. In the one case there is a close relationship or connection, and this makes the mother's heart beat warmly, according to the laws of nature, towards

her own child, who is bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh.

13. We are told by the Apostle Paul (Heb. x. 4) that "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins;" that is, he would tell us that the 1291 animals killed by the Jews in one year's regular service at the temple could not take away one sin. Yea, all the rivers of blood of slain beasts shed from the time of Moses down to the birth of our Saviour (a period of more than 1400 years)—all these could not atone for the very least sin. And why? for a very plain reason; because there was no *connection* between the blood of an animal and the sin of a man. You may have been guilty of ingratitude, malice, pride, perjury, or theft; what

The reason why the blood of animals cannot take away sin.

connection has taking a lamb, killing it, and sprinkling the blood upon you with your crime? None at all; the death of a goat and the sin of a man have nothing at all to do with each other. If, then, those old sacrifices had any value, it was because they referred to something that was to come after (Heb. x. 1).

I hope you understand this important point. How, I ask, can the death of a bullock, or a goat, or a lamb benefit a guilty man? In no way at all; and that because they are of different natures. When Adam had sinned, he might have sacrificed thousands of slain rams, but they would not have done him the least good, because they would have nothing on earth to do with his sin. Well, then, might the Apostle

say, "For it is not *possible* that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins;" and, without giving any other reason, this one is enough, viz., that they have nothing at all to do with man or his sin.

The principle of suretiship is that of connection.

14. To influence a person you must be connected with them, or form part of that to which they also belong. For example, the interests of the shareholders in a Company are greatly influenced by the conduct of the directors. Yea, the principle of connection or of representation (to which I shall allude by and bye) is so great, that if the chairman and the managing directors were to sign a false document, whether from good-nature or design, many of the shareholders, although quite innocent and

unconscious of the deed, would be ruined; widows and orphans all ruined; and this, alas! has too often happened.

Again, take the principle of suretiship, the meaning of which many thousands know to their sad experience! The act is a little one, but its results are great. You only take a pen and trace your name upon that piece of paper; but that little drop of ink has formed a connection between you and the person for whom you are bail, and the law now regards you both in the light of one person—so intimate is the *relationship* thus established between you. Your friend owes some money,—he absconds or he cannot pay; the creditors come to you because your name is on the paper—you must

either pay and make good his debts, or you must be ruined.

This is the sort of argument which the Prophet uses in that magnificent chapter (Isa. xliv. 15—19), where he is showing the folly of idolatry. He is arguing from the whole to the part; and this, of course, is based on the connection that exists between the two. The heathen had used part of his ash-tree for domestic purposes, to cook and to warm himself, and then he carves the rest of the log into a god, and prays to it to deliver him, forgetting that, as it was all one piece of wood a short time ago, the bit he has chosen for his god has no higher qualities than that with which he roasted his flesh, and that it is, therefore, only the stock of a tree.

15. Again, justice demands that the SAME NATURE that sinned should suffer and pay the penalty, and therefore if any one atones for others, that is, bears their legal punishment, he must be of the same nature with them, if his efforts are to do them any good.

Same nature that sinned must atone.

We need not say much to prove that this is a natural principle of justice, and flows from its equal dealings. If angels have sinned, how can man bear their penalty? and, if men have sinned, any sacrifice wrought in the angelic nature will profit them nothing. A much stronger reason ought to be found to show that the sin of one nature might be punished in another nature, than to infer that the same nature that sinned is the one which must

suffer, for this last course is natural and equal.

16. Now, this assumption of human nature by our Redeemer is the very thing which the Scriptures tell us must be done, which justice requires to be done, and which we believe Christ did do.

Scriptural proof.

Thus, if we look at the first promise made of a Saviour (Gen. iii. 15), He is called "the seed of the woman;" the promise was renewed to Abraham, that "in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18 with Gal. iii. 16), and to David, that of his seed God would raise up some one to sit on his throne (Psa. cxxxii. 11 with Rom. i. 3, and Luke i. 32).

Isaiah, too, sets forth the same truth in that wonderful passage (Isa.

ix. 6), "For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given:" and again chap. vii. 14.

But the truth is clearly laid down for us in Heb. ii. 11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified ARE ALL OF ONE (*i.e.* nature): for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," and 14: "Forasmuch then AS THE CHILDREN ARE PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD, HE ALSO HIMSELF LIKEWISE TOOK PART OF THE SAME: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Again, we read in ver. 17: "Wherefore in all things it *behoved* Him to be made like unto his brethren;" and therefore, of course, in the chief thing in which likeness might consist, viz., *Nature.*

The children were partakers of flesh and blood; He also Himself, therefore, took part of the same, and was made MAN.

Likeness of nature, therefore, is necessary to relationship, in the sense of which we are now speaking. "All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds" (1 Cor. xv. 39). In other words, their natures are different, and it is likeness of nature which forms a union between the members of a certain class, so that it is possible to understand that, if one member suffers, all the members may suffer with it. These great truths are just what you express in your Creed when you say "He was made man"—four very

short words, the full meaning of which God alone can understand.

To sum up: I am a sinful man; therefore, if I am to have a Saviour, He must be a man, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, or else He will not be my brother; He will not be able to do what I ought to do, nor to suffer what I ought to suffer, and his virtues or his sufferings will have no connection with myself.

The office of the kinsman.

17. Another reason why Christ should take our nature upon Him is that He might have the *kinsman's* right to interfere on our behalf. When we are in trouble we naturally turn to our nearest relations, and the brother's hand is more readily stretched out to help than that of an entire stranger.

Let me ask you to turn to Deut.

xxv. 5—10, and to Ruth iii. 9, 12, 13, and iv. 6, 14.

In chap. iii. 9 we read, "For thou art a near kinsman," and in the margin the same expression is translated, "One that hath a right to redeem."

It was the kinsman, then, who had this right, and this by virtue of his relationship. Christ became our kinsman by taking upon Him our nature; and this was the first step towards his securing to Himself a right to interfere on our behalf.

Why Christ did not take upon Him the nature of angels.

18. Now, some may ask, whether if Christ had taken upon Him the nature of angels it would have done the human race any good? I answer, it would NOT have done us any good, because anything which He might have done in

that nature would have had no connection with us men. That nature is different to ours, and therefore the Apostle tells us (Heb. ii. 16), "He took not on Him the nature of angels,"—the argument in this case being exactly the same as in the case of the blood of animals, to which I have already alluded.

Christ did not take upon Him the nature of angels, because God provided no salvation for the fallen angels, but has left them in their guilt.

Is Christ's Atonement, then, of any use to the fallen angels? Of none at all, because satisfaction was not made in their nature, and because it was never intended for them.

It is not for us to dare to say whether Redemption was or was not

possible for the angels; they sinned without a tempter, and God has left them without a Saviour as a proof of his justice and holiness for ever. It would appear to us, however, that had any redemption been prepared for them, the assuming their nature would have been necessary to meet the claims of justice.

Representation.

19. I have two more remarks to make under this head. The first is connected with a great principle which runs throughout all we have to say, which forms part of an atonement, and which, therefore, must be agreeable to justice. Let us call it by one word, *Representation.* This is very much connected with some of the ideas I have already brought before you, such as suretiship. I said that the surety be-

came of use to his friend by reason of his signature, which formed a connection or relationship between them; but I must also not forget to add that this involves another great principle, namely, that of *representation*, or, shall I say, LEGAL IDENTITY. Christ stood as the representative of the human race; all were in Him, even as 'Levi paid tithes when he was in the loins of his father Abraham' (Heb. vii. 9, 10). It was through this same principle that, when Adam fell his children fell, for in Adam all died (1 Cor. xv. 22), and "through the offence of *one* judgment came upon *all* men to condemnation." Then it is only following the same plan that Christ should be a representative person, and should be considered as one and the same with

those whom He would benefit. But, as I shall have some more to say shortly about the two Adams, I must say no more here, lest I should repeat the same thing.

That relationship or kinship has special duties may be inferred from the fact of its admitted privileges, for its natural claim and right to inherit the property of relatives dying without a will, has been acknowledged from the earliest times (Num. xxvii. 11).

How this truth was set forth in the law of Moses.

20. I will now refer you to the law of Moses, which often gives us the Gospel in such a plain sketch that all could understand it if they would but look at it—just as I might take many pages to describe a watch, and, perhaps, after all not give you a clear idea of

one, whereas you would understand much better in one minute what it was like if you had one in your hand. The truths of relationship, representation, and identity were brought before the Jewish worshipper in a very simple way,—he brought his bullock to the priest; and, placing his hands upon its head, he confessed over it all his sins, or the special sin for which he offered that sacrifice. This act would bring before his mind three truths, namely, that he was to consider the animal as identical with himself; that all his sins were supposed to be taken off from himself and placed upon that animal; and that the death of the animal was a figure of the penalty due to him for his own sin.

It would be a solemn thing for a

man to have laid his hands on the head of a great bullock, and, as he kept them there to tax his memory and conscience as to his shortcomings before God and his neighbour; and then, when he ceased speaking, to observe the priest coming forward with all the instruments of death—the bright, sharp knife, the clean basin, the cloths, the cords to bind the poor animal to the horns (or projecting corners) of the altar; and then to watch the knife as it gleamed in the air, and was plunged into the animal's throat, from out of which gash flowed the bright red blood. You know we often feel a little shock when we come across blood anywhere, as in the road for example; and, therefore, the worshipper must have felt a solemn thrill

when he saw the gasping animal writhing at his feet, and thought of the principles of representation, identity, transferred guilt, borne punishment, and a difficult pardon, secured only by the death of an innocent victim.

Meaning of the word "vicarious."

21. There are several words which set forth the meaning of the idea about which we are thinking at present, such as "representative," "substitute," "surety," "bail," and the longer word, "vicarious sacrifice," which is sometimes used as another name for the atonement of Christ.

"Vicarious" means some one in place of another, and this is the meaning of the word vicar.

King Henry VIII. gave the great tithes of many of the livings

which he took away from the monks to his favourites; but, as these were laymen, they were obliged to find some one to perform the spiritual duties of the place, and this tenant was their substitute, the vicarious person, or vicar.

In Christ becoming man there is no fraud on justice.

22. There is another point on which I would offer a remark. In Christ's taking upon Him human nature there is nothing contrary to the rules of justice, nor any breach of any of its rights. If this Divine person saw fit to be made man, to be born after the manner of men, to comply with all the necessary conditions, to ask for no favours, in what would justice receive damage? Justice, although armed with great power to exact from man payment for his debt, or

the penalty of his sin, had no power to prevent Christ of his own free will being made a man, provided always that it was done without any grace, or privilege, or claim for exemption from those evils under which man lay, through the action of justice. Christ was God, the Creator, and if He chose, according to the laws He Himself had made, to be united to our race in the usual way, by birth, had He not a right to do so? And did He break any principle of justice, or take any unfair advantage in so doing? Certainly not; Christ had a full right to become a man if He saw fit, and in doing this He did not defraud the justice of God of a tittle of its due, nor did He give the human race any cause of complaint, nor violate any right whatsoever.

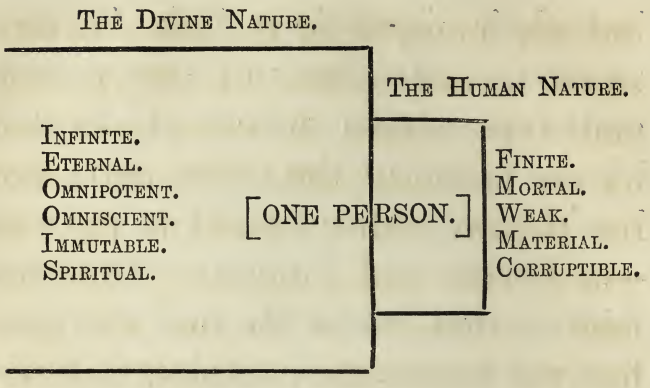
23. I will conclude this chapter with a simple statement of the truth which we profess to believe when we say that Christ, the Son of God, took upon Him human nature.

A statement of the doctrine of Christ's incarnation.

We believe that both natures remain without any change; the Divine nature is infinite, eternal, omnipotent, unchangeable; the human nature is local, finite, mortal, and so forth. We believe that the Son of God, who from the beginning partook with the Father the very essence of the Divine nature, assumed human nature. Observe, no new person comes into existence, though He who existed before has a new mode of being, but has not parted with any quality which He before possessed. Christ has two natures,

but their mysterious link is ONE PERSON. He has not one person and one nature which is formed by the union of the other two; nor has He two natures and two persons —a Divine and human. The true faith is that, while He had two perfectly separate and complete natures, He was, nevertheless, only ONE PERSON; and the efficient cause of our salvation, as we shall endeavour forthwith to prove, is that this Divine person obeyed and suffered in our stead, and fully met the demands of the strictest justice.

To set this grand truth before you as plainly as I possibly can, I would represent it in the following figure:—




This is one of the great truths or facts which we are required to believe; we are not asked to explain *how* the mystery is wrought, save that we know it is a triumph of God's wisdom and power, but we are commanded to accept it as a true and personal fact, upon no less authority than that of God Himself.

I have now endeavoured to explain one of the first things necessary to an atonement, and the idea, in one word, is RELATIONSHIP. Our Re-

deemer must be of the same nature as the sinner, so that his efforts may benefit the sinner; he must be of that nature because justice demands that the nature which sinned is the one which must suffer and obey, and because sameness of nature will give him the kinsman's privilege to interfere on behalf of his brethren.

My friend, put down this book and *think* over this point in your mind for a few minutes until you can understand the truth, the reasons by which it is proved, and agree to receive them both with your head and heart.

# PART II.

## REPARATION.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19).

Reparation: what it means.

24. I now pass on to the second point which forms one of the elements of an atonement. Observe, we are now not concerned with God's wisdom, which knows all the shapes of matter and all the thoughts of mind; we are not now dealing with God's power, which with its slightest whisper said, "Let there be light, and there was light;" we are not now dealing with God's goodness, which leads Him daily to load

his creatures with benefits; we are not now dealing with God's mercy, which inclines Him not to prosecute the criminal;—but we are concerned with one and the same attribute, God's equal JUSTICE. We must consider then another principle which justice lays down—It is that of REPARATION. This is not a difficult word to understand, and I have no doubt that you already know what it means. To "repair" means to make anything that has been injured good again, and to restore it to the good condition in which it was at first. If we were to express the same idea by another word, we should say, RESTITUTION. Restitution means this, that if you have wronged a person, you should give them satisfaction for the wrong; that

if you have inflicted any evil on them, you should return them as much good as will balance that evil, otherwise the scales of justice, as between you and them, would be uneven. Now, who can have anything to say against this principle? Do you ask why should it be so? May I not rather ask, Why should it not be so? Does not common sense, and our very reason, bear witness to its truth? As you can give no good reason why it should not be so, we can appeal to our conscience, and say that it is right, just, equal, that it should be so. If you have done an evil to any person you have broken the common law of right, you must pay the penalty for this; you must suffer, for you have made some one else suffer; you

must undo your wrong, and restore things as they were before, or the other person, perhaps, without any fault of his own, will have lost something that was good through your fault. This clearly would be unequal; or, in other words, unjust.

Restitution, satisfaction, or reparation (words which mean very much the same thing) is a principle of justice; and therefore we must expect to find this principle satisfied in an atonement for human sin. To make this principle still clearer, I shall explain it by something out of the Old Testament. Turn to the fifth chapter of Leviticus; in which we read about the fifth offering, the trespass offering. Without leaving my one point, and trying to explain too much, I can only call your attention

to verses 15 and 16. There we have the principle of restitution or satisfaction laid down, which is set forth in such detail in this offering only. The offender was to pay for the wrong that he had done, according to the priest's estimation, in shekels of silver. "And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest." So again the old law, which St. Paul tells us was 'just' (Rom. vii. 12), says (Exod. xxii. 3, 5, 6), "for he should make full restitution," and verse 14, "He shall surely make it good;" you can also read Lev. xxiv. 19—21.

Necessary in kind and degree.

25. We have stated enough to show that reparation is a point upon which justice insists.

Now reparation to be complete must be twofold; it must be rendered in kind and in degree. To state the case plainly:—Suppose that you were a fortunate gold-digger at Ballarat in Australia, and that you had laid up, say, 1000 ounces of gold-dust in your tent; you suddenly discover that your neighbour has robbed you, and you charge him with the crime; he confesses it; but having spent the money wishes to compensate you with 1000 ounces of silver; would this satisfy you? "No," you would say, "the quality of these two metals is different; you robbed me of gold, and you must pay me in gold." Any third person who heard you would say that your claim was quite "fair," "just," "right," "equal," and so forth. This

is reparation in *kind.* The man finds out then that he must pay you in gold, so he brings you a large sum, which, when you have counted, you find is 999 ounces. You summon him again and tell him, "You robbed me of gold and you must pay me in gold, but you must also pay me the full amount which you stole from me. There is an ounce short; I will prosecute you if you do not bring me that remaining ounce forthwith." The bystanders would say that you had *right* on your side, and that he must restore you the amount of which he cheated you to the very last farthing. This is reparation in degree. Justice then will have reparation—

(I.) In kind.

(II.) In degree.

It remains for us to inquire whe-

ther these rigid claims are fully met by the great atonement which the Lord Jesus Christ made on our behalf.

The two Adams.

26. Now let us, in order to have a clear insight into the subject, consider it in its relation with the first Adam. It is important to view it in this light, for it was through him that sin entered into the world, and therefore we should naturally suppose that any atonement must have some reference to the first sin. This view of the subject is borne out distinctly by the Word of God. The Bible tells us, "By one man sin entered into the world,"—that man was Adam. It is written (1 Cor. xv. 22), "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and again (Rom. v. 19), "as

by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Here there is a comparison between two persons. In the first clause we have the word "as," in the second the word "so," and these words form members of a comparison. This truth was what we might have expected, for the two Adams have certain marks in common, which explains the expression, where Adam is called the figure of "him that was to come" (Rom. v. 14). Adam is a covenant head, Christ is a covenant head. Adam is a public person and represents his children, Christ our great forerunner does the same. Adam's conduct involved others for evil; Christ's for good. Adam is the head of the human race according

to the flesh, Christ is the head of the Church according to the Spirit. There is, therefore, a resemblance between these two persons, their positions, and influence; wherefore it is probable that, in the atonement of the second Adam, special reference will be made to the sin of the first; and this enters into the idea which we are now considering, viz., *reparation.*

Further, the same thought is brought before us (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47), where we have a contrast between the two men who sum up the whole human race, because they are their federal heads, or representatives, in the sight of God. "The FIRST MAN, Adam, was made a living soul; the LAST ADAM was made a quickening spirit. The FIRST MAN is of the earth,

earthy; the SECOND MAN is the Lord from heaven."

In order to make this point clear, we now proceed to examine Adam's sin, and to see if reparation is made for it in kind and in degree, so that the balances of justice are again made quite equal, and there is nothing more to be exacted from the sinner.

Reparation in kind, what it means.

27. Here let me offer another remark in the outset: It is plain that when we talk of sin being atoned for *in kind*, we cannot mean that sin can be atoned for by sin; this were a contradiction in terms. Sin cannot be balanced by sin; this were adding guilt to guilt, and making the last state worse than the first. A breach is repaired by the healing of the breach; so a sin,

which is the breach of some virtue, can only be repaired by the discharge of that virtue which bears the relation of being exactly opposite to that sin. In this manner is the breach healed and the shortcoming supplied. Each sin was an outrage upon the law, as a whole, as well as an attack on a certain virtue. Christ did full homage to the law by the discharge of the virtue which was injured by the sin, so that the special virtue made amends for its opposite sin. Thus pride could not be morally compensated for by pride, but by humility; selfishness must be atoned for (in this sense) by unselfishness; hatred by love, and so forth. The crime and its atonement must be exactly equal.

To guard againt mistakes, I may

as well remark that when I talk in this chapter of a sin being "atoned for" by its opposite virtue, I am of course considering only one phase of the subject within the strict limits of the idea of "*reparation in kind*," without meaning to exclude the wider sense of atonement properly so called (founded on blood-shedding), to which I shall shortly refer, more at length, in its own place.

We must consider Adam's sin, and see in what it consists, and how the second Adam repairs its breach. Now, Adam's outward sin was eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of which God had said, "Thou shalt not eat it;" but this act involves a great deal more than the mere eating a little fruit. This was only its external shape, for

the act contained in itself the essence of many and great evils. So with our sins, they may differ in their various forms and circumstances, but their essential qualities of evil are more or less the same, and may be reduced to the same spiritual principles.

Of course "reparation in kind" necessarily supposes sameness of nature, but as we have already proved this point from a separate line of reasonings, we may now take it for granted, and consider the actual sin of Adam in more minute detail.

28. I. The first feature in Adam's sin that strikes us is its *motive*. This was SELF-EXALTATION; he wanted to raise himself higher than he was. The bait which the tempter held out to him was "that he should become as

Motive of Adam's sin self-exaltation.

God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. iii. 5); and when he took of the forbidden fruit, it would be with this object, to exalt himself at the expense of another. This involved an act of apostacy from God, an act of treason against the throne of God, an insult to the government of God, yea, a coming short of the glory of God; it was in short a WRONG against God. I need hardly say that no creature can wrong God in his person or essence (Job xxxv. 7, 8); any wrong refers to the character and glory of God as a Judge, a King, a Father, and is to be gauged by the *intention* of the evil-doer. The creature was made to show forth the glory of God (Psa. xix. 1, 2); the sinner has come short of this (Rom. iii. 23), and in this sense God's

honour is defrauded and suffers loss, or a *wrong* is done to God.

The direct bait with which Satan tempted Adam to sin was self-exaltation—exaltation in rank, that instead of being a mere man he should be higher and greater, for he should be as God (Gen. iii. 5); an exaltation in knowledge, that his sphere of knowledge should be made greater (Gen. iii. 5.); and consequently an exaltation in happiness, which might be supposed to flow from an increase of rank, and an increase of knowledge. This was one feature of Adam's sin, and how can this be atoned for *in kind?* I have said by its opposite virtue, or by a good act which exactly compensates for the evil. What this must be is now evident; it must be balanced by an act

of self-humiliation. Exaltation and humiliation are ideas of the same nature, differing only in degree.

Balanced by Christ's self-humiliation.

29. Adam's sin was self-exaltation; moral reparation must be made by its opposite, that is, by an act of "self-humiliation." This is the virtue in the second scale of justice to balance the sin. Now, did Christ render this? He did; in the strong yet simple language of Scripture: "He humbled Himself." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself" (Phil. ii. 5—8).

He who made the round world so sure that it cannot be moved, who spake and divided the light from the darkness, at whose reproof the pillars of heaven tremble, before whom goeth a fire, and coals are kindled at his presence—He humbled Himself: He whose throne is the heavens, and his footstool the earth, before whom the nations are as nothing and less than nothing, who weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, who made the stars also, and calleth them all by their names—He humbled Himself: He who hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the dust of whose feet are the clouds, who rebukes the sea and makes it dry, before whom the hills melt like wax, and the earth and the heavens flee

away—HE HUMBLED HIMSELF. Note this fact, ye angels, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure, and strike your harps to their loudest strain in honour of this admirable and matchless condescension!

He humbled Himself and took upon Him the form of a creature; but He "took not on Him the nature of angels," He was made man; He did not take upon Himself the nature of unfallen Adam, He took on Him the seed of Abraham (Heb. ii. 16); He did not assume the rank of a king, "He took upon Him the form of a servant;" He not only took upon Him the form of a servant, and laboured as a carpenter (Mark vi. 3), He submitted to the treatment of a slave; not only did He submit to want, pain, and

suffering, He humbled Himself to death; not only did He humble Himself to death, but to the vilest and most painful death, "even the death of the Cross." Between these two extremes there is indeed a great gulf. Well may we ponder this mighty fact as our thoughts range from the throne of God and rest upon the cross of Calvary.

In this way justice received reparation in kind for Adam's crime. Adam disarranged the balance by an act of self-exaltation; Christ restored the moral equilibrium by an act of self-humiliation.

Source of Adam's sin, unbelief.

30. The second remark which I offer on the sin of the first man is its *source:* this was WANT OF CONFIDENCE in God, or unbelief. He plainly showed this by

disbelieving God's express words, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17), and by believing the serpent, who said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. iii. 4).

Adam acted with a view to exalt himself, or to increase his own happiness; this was in effect taking his concerns out of God's hands, as if he dare trust God with his happiness no longer!

This want of confidence was a dishonour to God, an insult to his character, and therefore a wrong. Confidence in a person is practical praise. You have a treasure—a large sum in gold, a ruby larger than that which is in Queen Victoria's

state crown, the title deeds to an immense estate—you do not want to lose, but to keep your treasure safely. If you trust it into the hands of some one else, your conduct shows that you give him credit for certain good qualities, for you think your treasure will not be injured by him, but will be safe in his keeping. In fact, your confidence proves that you believe him to be truthful, honest, and wise. For this reason all through the Bible unbelief is considered as a dishonour and insult to God, whereas faith, or trust, is that which does Him honour; for it is a plain, practical way on our part of showing that we recognize his true character, and his many excellencies or perfections, namely, that He is great, holy, powerful,

wise, good, truthful, and faithful. Now, the dearest thing a man has is, after all, his happiness, especially his eternal happiness, or the welfare of his immortal soul. For this reason we cannot honour Christ or show our value of his great work more than by simply placing our souls, with their eternal interests, in his hands, and resting on his death and merits. This honours Him, and this is what we are commanded to do in the Gospel. In the doing of this there is a great reward, viz., eternal life; whereas great punishment, eternal death, is threatened to those who distrust Him, and trust in themselves or in anything else rather than in Him (Mark xvi. 16).

I have said enough to show you what the meaning of confidence is,

and how God could not overlook the slight of unbelief on the part of the creature He had just made of the dust of the ground.

But to return to the case of Adam. By his unbelief Adam, as it were, told the angels in heaven that he did not think God GOOD, because it was an attempt on his part to get more good, and therefore to get rid of some evil; it implied that he thought God SELFISH, because here was a good which God might have given him, but had kept from him; it implied that he did not think God JUST, because it would appear as if Adam had a right to this thing, and that God had not given him his due; it implied that he did not think God WISE, because he was altering God's arrangements; and when we alter a

thing, it is to improve it or make it better; it implied that he did not think God TRUTHFUL because he did not believe that God would really carry out the threat of death, which He had said He would. But the apostle tells us that he "who believeth not God makes Him (God) a liar" (1 John v. 10), *i. e.*, treats Him as if He were a false God, and his promise could not be depended upon. Yet to make all this worse Adam did believe Satan, who was a liar and the father of lies (John viii. 44), and acted upon his advice, though it contradicted the word of the true and living God. This was, indeed, adding insult to injury.

Balanced by Christ's life of faith.

31. The second feature then in Adam's sin was his want of confidence in God, which

was an insult to the Divine perfection and character. This dishonour can only be repaired by a life of *faith*, or confidence in God, which shall honour Him as much as the unbelief dishonoured Him.

This moral reparation was also rendered to the character and justice of God by Jesus Christ. His whole life was a life of faith. He never once doubted God. "The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Luke ix. 58). Yet He never suspected his Father's love and care; He knew that his bread should be given Him, and that his water should be sure (Isa. xxxiii. 16), believing that man did not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

God (Deut. viii. 3); his conduct was always guided by his own precept (Matt. vi. 25—34). Let us take Him when He was most tried; and nothing tries us so much as pain. Yet when the Lord Jesus hung on the cross in the agonies of death, no hard thought of God, no unbelief crossed his mind; His body is torn and bleeding; He writhes on the felon's cross; He is numbered among thieves; He is deserted by his friends; his cause seems on the eve of failure: his enemies are mighty and boast themselves; He is the scorn of men and the outcast of the people; his soul is vexed with sorrow, fear, and imputed guilt; his language is, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words

of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent" (Psa. xxii. 1, 2). Yet he glorifies God by his full faith and confidence which never quails, and adds, "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (Psa. xxii. 3). He honoured God's GOODNESS, for He believed God was good, and would do what in the end would bring the greatest amount of good; He honoured God's WISDOM by submitting to all that was laid on Him, and never wishing to have a single circumstance altered; He glorified God's JUSTICE, in being assured that not one needless pain was inflicted upon Him; He glorified God's holiness by believing that the Judge of all the earth would do what

was right; He glorified God's TRUTH AND FAITHFULNESS in leaving his cause with God alone, in being assured of the certain reward of his sufferings, and of his ultimate triumph: He did this when He uttered the prayer "Not my will, but thine be done," and when on the cross He freely bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Thus, if the character of God was insulted by Adam's unbelief, it was glorified by Christ's life of faith, and this life of absolute confidence was a reparation in kind for the first Adam's sin.

32. And thirdly, the evil result of these feelings, on Adam's part, was an outward act—an act of DISOBEDIENCE. He stretched forth his hand and took of the fruit (Gen. iii. 6). There could be no dis-

The result an act of disobedience.

pute as to his disobedience, for in the first instance it did not turn on the subtle thoughts of his heart, but was proved by the outward act, which none could explain away. Adam disobeyed God, that is, did what God told him not to do—and followed his own will, rather than the will of God. Now the will of God is law to heaven and earth; and God cannot express his will to the creature, and then not regard whether the creature follows it or not; if this were so, God would resign his rights as a King, a Law-giver, and a Judge. If the creature acts according to the will of God, he is obedient; God is pleased with him, will do him good, and make and keep him happy; but if the creature prefers his own will to that of God, then God is dis-

pleased, and will punish him for his disobedience. God thinks obedience better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams (1 Sam. xv. 22); for these sacrifices may be brought by a hypocrite who has no true love in his heart. But obedience, when it is true, flows from love, and this is an honour to a God of love, who desires that his creatures should worship and serve Him from freewill love, which makes his service "perfect freedom." Obedience is a proof of love, as Moses told the Israelites, Deut. xxx. 15—20; as our Saviour told his disciples, John xiv. 15, 21, 23, xv. 10, 14; and as the apostle John says, 1 John ii. 3—5.

Common acts may become wrong from circumstances.

33. Now some seem to think that Adam's sin of eating the forbidden fruit was a

very small one to bring such dreadful results on himself and his race; but the act, apart from its external shape, must be regarded in its essence as an act of disobedience. The act in itself might be neutral; but, after God had forbidden it, it acquired a moral meaning, and became an act of disobedience or sin. Thus, any of you who are mothers might tell your little child not to stir out of the house all day while you were out. Under ordinary circumstances there would be no harm in the child's going out; but, now that you had forbidden it with a mother's authority, it would become an act of disobedience if the child did so, and your feelings would be grieved by the child's neglect of your wishes and disregard of your

orders, which were probably given only for the child's good.

We are sure that God did not grudge Adam that fruit, for He gave him so many thousands of beautiful trees besides, which were pleasant to the sight and good for food (Gen. ii. 9), and therefore it was not because God was unkind that He forbade Adam to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but because He had some good and wise reasons connected with his own glory and Adam's good.

Reasons for the commandment given to Adam.

34. For example, we have said that obedience is what God loves, and it is all the return which the creature can make. God wanted, then, to see if Adam was grateful, and would abstain from this act out of sole regard to the will of

God. Then, as obedience and love must be free to have any value in the sight of God, this command was given as a test of Adam's obedience to prove him (Deut. viii. 2), and to see if his obedience was free will. If he stood the test, the Lord would accept his obedience as a pleasant sacrifice, and reward him by keeping him happy in Paradise.

And there was another good reason why God should have withheld one tree from Adam. God had created Adam, had given him the garden of Eden, made him the king of the earth, and put all the sheep and oxen, yea, "and the beasts of the field, under his feet" (Psa. viii. 6, 7). But would it not be well to remind Adam that he and everything he saw really belonged to some

one else? and how could this be done more easily or simply than by forbidding Adam to eat of a particular tree, so that every time Adam passed by the tree he would be reminded of the duty which he owed to God, who was the real Lord and owner of all.

This truth was a very proper one for the creature to remember, and was taught him in this way very simply and easily, without any unkindness or hardship. An illustration of this truth may be taken from our own customs: The Lord of the Manor often holds a court-leet, and does some nominal act in order to exercise and maintain his right of Lordship; for the same reason he will insist on a quit-rent, or a peppercorn-rent being paid for a piece of land

which may have been enclosed from the waste of the Common. It may be a very small sum, perhaps twopence, and nothing like the value of the land, but it is an acknowledgment of his rights, and the smallest sum paid annually keeps them in force in the eye of the law.

We see good reasons why the command should have been given, and that the guilt of Adam's act consisted in its being an act of disobedience. Moreover, this obedience was the only return which Adam could render to God, and it was due to God; the withholding it, then, was both an act of ingratitude and a wrong to God. It was a wrong to God, for Adam was God's property, and he gave himself away to a new master without leave; and

all the earth, which God had said was very good, and showed forth his glory, now became spoiled and put out of order by sin.

A life of disobedience the consequence.

35. There is another remark which I must here make, that Adam, having sinned once could not stop sinning, and that his life then became one continual act of disobedience. His thoughts were tainted with evil, his words were evil, his acts became evil, and he was now every moment breaking the first great commandment of the law, of loving God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, which he had kept so easily and pleasantly before.

The obedience of the second Adam.

36. Adam's sin then was an act of disobedience, and its result a life of disobedience.

Now how must this sin be balanced? By a life of perfect obedience, and by an act of special obedience. Hear the words of the second Adam (Psa. xl. 6—8), "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not require" (that is to say, God required something more than these, as they did not meet the case, for the reasons stated in Part I., under the head of "Relationship"); "but mine ears hast thou opened" (*i. e.* "digged" or bored through with the awl, in token of my willing and "perpetual obedience." See Exodus xxi. 6); "burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to DO THY WILL, O my God; yea, thy law is in my heart." Also read Heb. x.

1—9. Christ came to obey the whole law, which was written on the fleshy tables of Adam's heart, and then was put forth again under ten heads at Sinai, and written on two tables of stone. That law is exceeding broad (Psa. cxix. 96), and requires every duty and virtue for the space of a life-time. As we shall refer again to the holiness of Christ's acts and sufferings, it is enough for us to mention this point shortly here, and we allude to it only as it forms part of one train of reasoning under the subject of Reparation. If every single point were to lead us off into its details and proofs, we should not be able to sketch any argument in its general outline, nor to make it bear upon one particular point.

But as Adam had one special commandment, to refrain from eating the fruit of a certain tree, as a mark of pure obedience and homage to God; so our Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, had a special commandment laid upon Him as a test of his obedience and homage to God. Adam's was a simple and trivial self-denial; Christ's was most difficult and painful: Adam's was to abstain from eating a fruit, to which he was not urged by hunger; Christ's was to lay down his life and suffer agony, from which his sinless human instincts would naturally recoil. He became obedient, but not merely in a general way, He became obedient unto the greatest limit of self-sacrifice, unto death—*even* the death of the cross (Phil. ii. 8). "This com-

mandment," says He (John x. 18), "have I received of my Father."

His death, in one out of the many points of view in which we may regard it, may be considered as an act of pure obedience to the will of the Father, and so every one of his sufferings may also be regarded as a distinct act of obedience in its relation to the will of God. For we all shrink from pain, and if any one of his own free consent submits to pain from regard to the will of another, it is an act of the purest obedience that we can conceive. Death was the test of his obedience, and it was its limit, because it could be proved no further. Yet the word "even" is emphatic. Some deaths are private, speedy, painless, and honourable. This was public, lingering, agonizing,

and shameful. This act of obedience on Christ's part makes reparation to the justice and glory of God for Adam's disobedience, for this freewill act proves that God's service is perfect freedom, that his commandments are not grievous (1 John v. 3), that in keeping of them there is great reward (Psa. xix. 11), and this wipes off the insult and reproach which Adam's sin has cast on God's law, character, and service.

Turn to the fifth chapter of Romans, and in the nineteenth verse you will find this train of reasoning simply yet fully set forth: "For as by *one man's disobedience* many were made sinners, so by the *obedience of one* shall many be made righteous."

Now, as Adam's eating of the

forbidden fruit contained the essence of certain sins, so did Christ's death (viewed simply in one point of view as an act of reparation with reference to Adam) contain the essence of those opposite virtues, for it was the greatest act of self-humiliation on his part; it was the greatest proof of his thorough faith and confidence in God, and it was both the test and triumph of his obedience.

To sum up. For—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (1.) Adam's self-exaltation, | A reparation in kind was offered to Divine justice by— | (1.) Christ's self-humiliation, |
| (2.) Adam's want of confidence, | | (2.) Christ's life of faith, |
| (3.) Adam's disobedience, | | (3.) Christ's obedience unto death. |

So that as far as this point goes the balances of justice appear to be equal.

Now, pray read this part over again, slowly, so that your mind may feel fully the force of each thought.

The point proved from the two temptations.

37. I will throw the same idea of Reparation briefly into another form. St. John (1st Epis. ii. 16) classes sins under three general heads—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Now each of these formed part of the first sin. Eve was guilty of the lust of the flesh when she saw that the tree was good for food, and when this motive tempted her to sin. She was guilty of the lust of the eye when she looked and coveted the fruit because it was pleasant to the sight; and she was guilty of the pride of life in coveting it as a tree to be desired to make one wise,

which involved pride, or an effort at self-exaltation. In like manner was reparation made for these phases of sin, by our Lord in his temptation by Satan in the wilderness. Satan tempted Christ with the lust of the flesh when he said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread;" he tempted Him with the lust of the eye when he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; he tempted Him to an act of pride when he would have had Him cast Himself off the temple, in order to prove by this presumptuous act that He was the Son of God.

Thank God the second Adam was more than conqueror; He spoiled the strong man armed, being stronger than he, and gave

full reparation in kind to the justice of God.

### REPARATION IN DEGREE.

Reparation in degree.

38. I now pass on to consider the other element which must form a perfect reparation, and that is reparation in degree. Observe, then, the measure of Adam's sin, or its *degree*. He stands upon a certain level in the scale of being, and he is guilty of an act of self-exaltation; yea, even to the throne of God, for he would become as God, knowing good and evil. The measure of his guilt, then, is the difference between these two natures; and as this is infinite, so the degree of his guilt is infinite, for the character of a crime must be affected by the position of the criminal, and of him against

whom the crime is committed. I have stated that an act of self-humiliation was needed to balance man's self-exaltation, but self-humiliation, like a thousand other things, is relative. It may reach from this point to that point, and still not reach between the two points which are necessary in the given case.

The three natures.

39. There are, so far as we know, three natures belonging to intelligent beings, of very different ranks. Let us argue the case in reference to these. To make the point as clear as possible, let us suppose the relations of the three natures to each other set forth as follows:—

1. The Divine Nature.
2. The Angelic Nature.
3. Human Nature.
   - (*a*) Unfallen human nature.
   - (*b*) Fallen human nature.

These natures are, as it were, on different levels, and set before us the idea of unequal ranks.

The first supposition.

40. Now, perhaps, you ask if Divine justice would not have been satisfied had Christ humbled Himself, and crossing the mighty gulf that exists between the Creator and the creature, taken upon Him the nature of angels? I answer, this would not have satisfied justice in the matter of degree. It is an infinite condescension for God to be made a creature at all; but this is not the measurement in the case before us. The sin is man aspiring to be God. Had Christ taken upon Him the nature of angels, He would not have stooped low enough, and there would have been a gap between the angelic and the human

natures (No. 2 and No. 3), for which there would be no satisfaction in that atonement. Justice would still claim satisfaction in degree, because the Redeemer had not met the case by descending to the level of that nature in which the crime was committed. We may quote St. Paul and say, "He took not on him the nature of angels" (Heb. ii. 16).

Second supposition.

41. Do you ask if the humiliation and obedience of an angel taking upon him man's nature would meet the requirements of justice? To this I distinctly reply, that it would not. The required interval between No. 1 and No. 2 would not be spanned in this case, and therefore justice would not be satisfied in the matter of degree. The angel might humble himself

and obey, but the measure of his humiliation would not equal that of man's exaltation, and there would be a gap between the Divine nature and the angelic nature, to which no reference would be made in this scheme of atonement. This method then would not meet the exact claims of infinite justice.

Third supposition.

42. Suppose, again, that by a fresh act of Divine power Christ had been made man, but instead of being born of a woman, had been made like Adam, unconnected with the race by birth, possessing human nature in all its beauty and strength, and free from its special infirmities. What then? Would this have met the demands of justice, so that the bond of death might be cancelled by the surety?

It would not—justice is justice, and deals with rights, but not with privileges. Favour belongs to mercy and not to justice. There is a difference of level between unfallen and fallen human nature: humanity must lie in shivers upon the level to which by its own fault it has been dashed, and from which it cannot be raised up, save legally, justly, and therefore rightfully. Were any other course pursued, mercy would encroach upon justice, which, from the unity of the Divine perfections, cannot be.

43. There remains then only one further case—the sin is, man exalting himself, in intention, to the level of God; this can only be balanced by a Divine person taking upon him the nature of man. But

The last supposition.

since man by his act has fallen and reduced himself to a lower level, then must that Divine person descend to that level, and take upon him fallen human nature, as it were, in its rags. Thank God, this is what Jesus did—Himself bare our infirmities and carried our sorrows, and was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, which I need hardly say is no necessary part of human nature. Now the measurement between the crime and its reparation is the same, and if the balances of justice are brought forth, they are perfectly equal in the matter of full Restitution and Reparation in kind and degree. The intermediate distance in both cases is the same, and there are now no gaps between different natures.

Yes, man aspiring to be God can only be equalled by God condescending to be man. How sublime! how simple! Without doubt, great is the mystery of godliness. To this agree the words of Scripture—"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. ii. 17). This is what the Son of God did. Fettered with fallen human nature Christ rises up to all the demands of the law, repairs, as it were, its broken tables, offers an obedience equal in quality (so far as purity goes, and superior in intensity) to that of Paradise, and silences for ever the thunders of avenging justice.

The reasoning of this chapter applies to the case of each one of us, for our various special acts of sin are only phases of the above principles of evil—for all sins, though different in form, are the same in essence, and therefore for each transgression of our own an act of reparation might be found in Christ's obediential life, putting for one moment out of consideration the necessary element of expiation or sacrificial bloodshedding.

Relationship and Reparation.

44. Now add this second idea of Reparation to that of Relationship; observe how the second involves the first. Herein let us admire the unity of truth. Reparation must all along take relationship, or sameness of nature, for granted; else the humiliation would be incomplete, the confidence and obedience would

have no connection with the sin, and the question of degree would not be solved.

Thus we see none but the Son of God can do sinful man any good; nor can He be our Saviour unless He take our nature upon Him, and make reparation or satisfaction in kind and degree for the sin of Adam. Reparation is one of the claims of stern justice; the claim is fully met by the incarnation and reparative obedience of the Son of God, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

# PART III.

## OBEDIENCE.

"He will magnify the law and make it honourable."

Obedience due to the law.

45. ANOTHER element in an atonement to which we would refer is OBEDIENCE. It will not be necessary for us to say much on this head, as it is to a certain extent included in our remarks under the preceding part. It deserves, however, our special attention in one grand feature. In the former chapter we have considered obedience as part of Christ's reparation for Adam's sin, but we must view it also as a debt due to

the majesty of the law. A law is honoured when it is kept, and it is outraged when it is broken. Obedience is its glory—disobedience its reproach. Now the law under which Adam was created in Paradise was called a covenant of works. The meaning of this is that there were two contracting parties; and one of them, God, of his own free will, made himself a debtor, and promised to reward man if he kept the law. "This do, and thou shalt live" (Gal. iii. 12). So long as man obeyed he had a right to the reward, because God had joined obedience and the reward together. This covenant of works was broken when Adam sinned, and he could comply with its terms no longer. The law at Sinai was a republication of the covenant of works, and amongst

many objects it proved man's inability to keep the law, and his need of a Saviour. "The law entered that the offence might abound." "By the law is the knowledge of sin, that every mouth might be stopped and all the world might become guilty before God" (Rom. v. 20; iii. 19, 20). Its purpose was to condemn man, to show him that his hope, founded on the covenant of works, was now vain, and that he must look to grace and not to works; to the gospel and not to the law. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." But still that law was holy, just, and good, and its obedience honourable and easy. It was due to the honour of the law that it should be carried into practice, else a reproach would

rest upon its Author, and a suspicion might exist that its demands were unfair and unsuitable; it were, moreover, a reflection on God's glory if his law were never seen in full action, and never kept among the sons of men. Christ did carry it out, and proved it to be holy, just, and good; He declared it to be easy, delightful, and honourable; He fulfilled it as a covenant of works, earned its reward, and bought back the forfeited inheritance as a matter of right.

This would be a necessary part of a Saviour's duty to fulfil the law; that is, not only to give reparation for Adam's sin, but satisfaction to the whole law, considered in its own claims. The law was of great breadth; it demanded a life, a holy

life; its purity extended to the subtle thought. Its one great command was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Deut. vi. 5; Luke x. 27). This was what Adam did in Paradise. To him practically the law was embodied in that one test of obedience of not eating the forbidden fruit, and so long as he observed that, the other Ten Commandments being written upon his heart, he kept them easily, according to the law of his being; but far otherwise was it when he sinned, then the whole moral law was broken (Jas. ii. 10), and his power to keep it entirely lost.

After his fall, the command to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength remained in full

force, and could never be repealed, but his power to keep it was gone. Still that law must be kept, or justice will for ever wave its flaming sword, and never listen to any terms of reconciliation.

This, then, is what our Saviour did: He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it in both its branches: "I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." And his cheerful, intelligent, exact, and faultless obedience satisfied God. So also He fulfilled all righteousness, and kept the second table of the law, in loving his neighbour as himself. The fiery law of Sinai might bring forth all its claims, and might search into the life and heart of Christ, but it would find that its demands were met, and that it had, in

one instance at least, been practically shown forth, and therefore glorified.

But the general point of view which we are considering at present is obedience, as that positive debt which the law required on its own account, to satisfy its demands and earn its reward. The second Adam fulfilled the covenant of works, and therefore *earned the reward.* He bought back the inheritance which Adam had lost. The law was now a debtor to reward the second Adam, and, by virtue of the principle of Representation, all those who by faith are one with Him.

I hope you see clearly that this is a necessary part of an atonement; the thought is somewhat like the last, but still distinct. Add it to the

other two that we have already considered, so that you may be able gradually to grasp all the ideas which enter into an atonement for human sin.

# PART IV.

## SUFFERING.

"We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Suffering the natural result of sin.

46. I PROCEED to consider the chief element which enters into an atonement for sin, about which there is much to say, and hard to be understood. In following out the train of my own thoughts, I have been most anxious to go no further than the Word of God warrants. I offer some of the following suggestions with diffidence, as the subject is both difficult and too

wonderful for man's unaided reason. We have considered the ideas of Relationship, Reparation, and Obedience, and we now enter upon that which forms the staple of an atonement, viz., Suffering. What suffering is I need not inquire, nor try to paint in words, because you all know too well what it means. Who my reader may be I know not; one thing I know, that he is a sufferer. Have you ever had fever, a broken limb, rheumatism, or disease of any kind? Then you know what suffering of the body is. Have you ever wept over the coffin of a friend? have you ever felt an angry feeling upon receiving an injury? have you ever been disappointed? have you ever felt afraid? Then you know what suffering of the mind is, and

this is enough for my present purpose. The first sort is called in one word, pain; the latter, sorrow.

47. Suffering is the necessary result of sin, and is so woven up with it by eternal justice, that they cannot be rent asunder. You cannot be happy, unless you are good or holy; and you cannot sin without incurring suffering or evil (Num. xxxii. 23). For example, what is sin? Sin is the separation of the soul from God. What then is its due, or its exact opposite? Separation of God from the soul; this is the treatment of equity. But if there be "only One good," viz., God, who is good, has good, and does good, then separation from the source of all good not only involves evil, but is of itself

From the nature of the case.

the greatest evil that can be conceived.

Suffering is the law of sin, being wrought in the very texture of its nature. As soon as Adam sinned he could not help feeling the weight of his ingratitude, and this of itself was suffering, to say nothing of his fear of the law, which directly threatened suffering—"This do and thou shalt die."

From the nature of justice.

48. This truth flows from the nature of justice, for, as we have said, justice gives like to like, and to all their due, therefore the man who has done evil has earned evil; but we may sum up personal evil (whether of mind or body) under one word, Suffering. And further, justice demands the execution of the penalty of the law; it

demands this as a debt due to the truth of the law; it demands this to restore the uneven balance; for the broken law is in one scale, and the amount of threatened suffering must be in the other. In short, this doctrine of rewards and punishments lies at the very root of our ideas of law, justice, and government. Furthermore, if the law's penalty were never borne, justice would have arrears to claim, and a suspicion might exist as to the equity of the punishment and the frailty of the law in not maintaining its rights. For these reasons justice insists that the penalty of the law (a certain amount of suffering) must be borne, or else it is impossible that grace can be offered to the offender upon any terms whatever.

49. The question which first de-
The penalty of the law. mands our attention is, What is the penalty of the law. This is a subject on which we should have clear ideas, for the honest, though hard questions that meet us are, What was the penalty, and was it fully borne? It is clear that, if justice has threatened a penalty, nothing but the bearing that penalty, when it has been incurred, can satisfy justice, and the question for our personal comfort is, Did Christ really bear this penalty?

50. "Satisfaction," applied to the
Satisfaction: what it means. soul, is a state of complete REST, because every desire has obtained its object. Satisfaction is the highest state of soul; it is, in short, HAPPINESS, and it explains the truth, that happiness has no desires. Ap-

plied to the law, satisfaction means that the claims of the law are so fully met that it asks for no more. Consider this with regard to its penalties. Man by his sin broke the law, and incurred its penalties; therefore the penalty must be borne, or the law will not be quieted; and if it be not fully borne, then the accuser, Satan, might point out a flaw in the satisfaction, impeach justice, and claim the execution of its rights.

51. The penalty of the law must, by the very nature of the case, be an evil. It sentences the evildoer to evil—to mental and physical evil; in other words, to sorrow and pain. This is in effect the curse of the law, or what is meant by the curse of God. To curse is to adjudge a person to evil,

The penalty of the law is in one word, "suffering."

and is the result of wrath. The real curse of God, then, is a spiritual evil, felt by the soul. It is a *sense* of the loss of his favour, and this is indeed SORROW; it is a *sense* of his wrath and indignation, and this is indeed SORROW; and all this is accompanied by an agonizing *sense* of the evil of sin, which is the height of mental SORROW.

Sorrow is the sensation of the soul under present evil, and this very sense is its misery, and its direst agony is thus begotten, as it were, of itself. This sorrow, as we may learn from Scripture, was expressly threatened in the first instance. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly *multiply thy sorrow;* in *sorrow* thou shalt bring forth children. And unto Adam he said, Cursed is the

ground for thy sake; in *sorrow* shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Gen. iii. 16, 17; Isa. l. 11); and therefore sorrow is the lot of all, because that all have sinned and turned every one to their own evil way.

But there is a penalty to be inflicted on the external part of man, his body; and this is pain—pain, with all its many aches and forms, which at last end in that most terrible thing, DEATH. The demand of the holy law was a life, and the claim of the broken law is a life forfeited, or death. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17). But we read that the blood is the life thereof, or the symbol of life, and therefore it is only expressing the above truth under a different form

when it is stated "That without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins" (Lev. xvii. 11).

The direct threat and penalty of the law, as expressed by God in Paradise, appears to be death—temporal death, with all the evils and sorrows of this life, which seize upon us the moment we are born, and at length merge into their greatest and last form, DEATH.

Spiritual death.

52. The question which some one may now ask is, if SPIRITUAL DEATH is not also to be viewed as part of the *penalty* of the law? We are inclined to answer that it forms no part of the threatened penalty of the first law. To make this clear we must inquire what is the meaning of spiritual death? Spiritual death is a con-

dition of soul, or that state into which it has fallen through sin. It is the necessary action of sin. A cancer may eat into the body, and perhaps, take away all feeling from a limb; but this state is a result of that special disease. Spiritual death is where the mind is clouded with ignorance—it does not know God; it is where the heart is hard and cold; it cannot feel, it cannot love, and this is spiritual death. The understanding and the affections are the two principal parts of the soul, and to these we chiefly refer, though we may also say that the conscience is no longer a true balance as to good and evil, or right and wrong, and that the will, which before was fixed upon good, has now veered round, and is fixed upon evil; so that if it ever

should will good, it has lost the power of doing that good. This is a state of soul; in truth, a very evil state—an evil in itself, and full of sorrow. We do not for one moment deny that it is an evil, but the point which we are considering is, whether this was the direct threat or penalty of the law, or whether this is not a necessary result flowing from the nature of sin, and so wrought up with sin that it cannot, as it were, be separated from sin. This it may be, and still not be the direct penalty of sin. We argue the question in this manner on account of asking the honest question, whether Christ did really bear the penalty of the law and our curse; but we conclude that, as spiritual death was no part of the curse considered as an external

something to be inflicted, so it was not necessary that he should know what spiritual death was, either in the want of knowledge and love, or that he should suffer from insensibility and "hardness of heart." Nay, as we shall hereafter prove, he could not suffer from these, for this would have taken away the *quality* of his sufferings, which was their purity and holiness, and have tainted them with evil. The wicked, both in this world and the next, feel remorse and despair—states of mind of the most intense sorrow; but these states arise from their wicked selves, and are not part of what is directly due to the evil which the retributive vengeance of the law inflicts. It was not necessary, nay, it was impossible, that Christ should go through

these phases of mental sorrow in his sufferings, which form the expiation of our sins.

Eternal Death.

53. And now we pass on to consider the subject of Eternal Death, and the honest questions which we must put before ourselves are what Eternal Death means; whether it forms part of the directly threatened penalty of the first law, and whether therefore Christ was bound to suffer it, in order to discharge us from the grasp of that exacting justice. Eternal death, stripped of all hard words and ideas, is the eternal banishment of the soul from God. Of course it involves evil, *i. e.*, personal evil or suffering; it may perhaps involve the *quality* or *intensity* of that suffering, viz., that it should not be slight but in-

tense; but it certainly does involve the idea of time or duration.

Now the question is, was this part of the direct threat or penalty of the first law? We reply that we do not think it was, or else God would have been bound to carry it out in our case. It is my earnest desire to write not only plainly and simply on this point, which will require your attention, but also very carefully, not to follow my own thoughts, without the warrant of God's most holy word.

We think that though eternal death was not the direct penalty of the first law, it was its natural result—I say, its natural and necessary result, unless some external cause prevented its action.

Observe carefully that there is a

difference between the necessary result of a thing and the thing itself. Eternal death was a result of Adam's sin, unless some one interfered. It was not the direct curse, but a natural consequence of the broken law. We think thus for the following reasons:—

Adam had done God a wrong, but he was himself utterly unable to undo that wrong or to make restitution. He could not undo the fact that he had sinned, and the only restitution he can make is to suffer; and therefore what ray of hope is there for him, or must not his punishment if left to its own action be eternal? Again, Adam was as unable of himself to recover his original righteousness, which he had lost, as we are to stop the earth's

motion with one word, or to turn winter into a sudden summer. He could not do it, as a matter of fact he could not. Again, Adam could not restrain himself from acts of sin (see section 34); he had sinned once and could not cease sinning, and his soul, supposing it separated in death from its outer case, the body, would continue to sin, and therefore must be kept apart from the Holy God, eternal separation from whom is the essence of the second death.

But again, God made man's soul immortal, and decreed that it should live for ever. But it has sinned, it cannot undo its sin, nor restore itself to its first condition, and yet it cannot cease to live; then it must live for ever apart from God, unless some friendly power from some

other quarter is exerted to repair the breach and to atone for its sin.

Once more we may see that eternal death is the natural result of Adam's sin, from considering the sin itself. Observe, I say, the result of his crime, if not interfered with. For the guilt of a sin is affected by the character of him against whom it is done; therefore the degree of Adam's guilt was as the obligation he broke, and as the character of God against whom it was done; but these were infinite, therefore the guilt of Adam's sin was infinite; but he was finite, therefore he could only suffer an infinite penalty, by going on suffering, *i. e.*, making efforts to atone fully and to reach the measure of satisfaction; but this he could never do, therefore he must always

remain a debtor to suffering; in other words, if left to himself and the action of his own sin, he must suffer eternal death.

Duration of penalty not mentioned in the first covenant.

54. Let us see if any light can be gathered from the law itself. Now the law does threaten a direct penalty. Temporal evils are mentioned, with their sum death. But no mention is made of duration. It is not necessary to mention degree, but duration ought to be mentioned if part of it; and if in the first instance men had been *sentenced to eternal death*, it is hard to see how a Saviour could have come. We were sentenced to death; we are under the sentence, and it is carried out in the case of each of us, and in the case of our surety; but

through him its sting has been taken away, and to the believer it has been reduced to a legal form to be gone through, and is no longer the bitter penalty it was. But I must not anticipate what must follow elsewhere. The law makes no mention of *how long* its penalty must be borne, although justice will require a strict proportion between the crime and its punishment; but it does not follow that duration is part of this. And further, the law, whilst it threatens a direct penalty, though it does not offer nor hold out any hope of pardon, does not anywhere declare that it is impossible. Its terms do not preclude the expedient of a Saviour, supposing all to be done legally. It held out no hope; but it did not forbid hope, for it did not

directly threaten eternal death; nor did it state that it would not accept satisfaction if any person could freely discharge its duties, and suffer its penalties, so that the release might be made in the way of righteousness.

We infer, then, that the distinct sentence of the first law was death, temporal death, with all its forms of pain, sorrow, and suffering; that spiritual death, though in itself a fearful curse, was part of the necessary action of sin, and that eternal death would be its necessary consequence, if it were left to its own career and not checked by some external person. We proceed to show in a general way that Christ did suffer the denounced penalty, and that suffering, mental and bodily,

ending in actual death (the symbol of a forfeited life), was rendered by Him to appease the majesty of the broken law.

Christ's mental sufferings.

55. Let us then consider Christ's mental sufferings. That He suffered sorrow in his human soul is clear, for we read (Isa. liii. 10) "his *soul* was made an offering for sin," *i. e.*, the mental agony which his soul underwent formed part of the expiation of sin. He is called in the touching language of the prophet "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. liii. 3). There is, perhaps, not one phase of human sorrow with which our Saviour did not become acquainted; He wept like a mourner over Lazarus, and shed tears over Jerusalem, and knew every grade of sorrow, until they all

mingled together in the dark hours of Gethsemane and Calvary. Ah! since Adam fell there have been millions of sorrowing men, but there has been only one man of sorrows! Jesus was sorrowful, even unto death, and an angel came from heaven to strengthen Him with sympathy and hope (Matt. xxvi. 38; Luke xxii. 43). This agony, from his purity, from his fine feelings, and his capacities, must have been more *intense* than that of any lost soul, at any given period of its sufferings. But this subject opens up so wide a field that we can only touch upon it in its general bearing, and not in detail.

To get an insight into the variety of his mental sorrows, we may reduce some of them to the following classes, observing that—

SORROW is the sensation of soul under present evil.

Christ was a man of sorrows, and felt sorrow, from the *sensation* of the hiding of his Father's face (*i.e.*, his blessed experiences of joy, love, and hope which spring from union with God, were withheld). This is the sense of loss.

" from the actual mental *experience* of what the wrath of God for sin was (God's anger is described as hot and fiery, or, what *fire* is to the body, such is God's wrath to the spiritual part, containing in itself the essence of sorrow and agony; by tasting and feeling this, Christ appeased it, for it must be borne, or it could not be quenched).

" from the pressure of imputed guilt.

" from his clear knowledge of the vile and numberless sins of the human race.

" from his personal contact with evil and the author of evil. Good was in contact with evil, and as was the good, such was the sensation of the evil.

" from a sense of shame, in being treated like a guilty person, in having Barabbas preferred before him, and in being crucified like a slave and felon.

" from his sense of being forlorn or ALONE; in feeling forsaken of God (Ps. xxii. 1; Mark xv. 34); and being deserted by his disciples.

" from hearing the insults of the mob as he hung on the cross.

" from the treachery of Judas, and the conduct of Peter.

But I have said enough to prove the point, and to suggest the above heads as subjects of thought and prayer. The other part of his mental sufferings would arise from the action of fear, which is the feeling of the soul under the prospect of evil. He suffered from FEAR at the prospect of his sufferings, at the approach of death, and at the consideration of the wrath of God (Psa. xl. 12; Luke xxii. 42; John xii. 27; Heb. v. 7).

I do not say that our Saviour suffered from fear because He was afraid or had less courage than many of the martyrs; but because it was necessary that He should *know* from feeling what this suffering was. He had to *experience* the agony of fear, viewed as a phase of mental torment. He had to be wrung under a sense

of it, and these, his mental experiences, formed the legal satisfaction in the eye of the law. It wants an effort of mind to grasp the meaning of the thought stated, and to distinguish between having fear, and suffering from the *mental sensations* of fear, as a matter of design, and will.

His bodily sufferings.

56. As regards the second general point of Christ's bearing the penalty of the law by suffering pain and death, we need not say much, as it is clear to any one who reads the account, in the Gospels, of his last sufferings and death. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isa. lii. 14). He was subject to all the bodily pains that we are, to wit, hunger, thirst, cold, fatigue, and death. He was bound,

struck, spit upon, beaten with the reed, scourged, nailed to the cross, where at last He expired after three hours intense agony. As regards this peculiar death it was most painful, because though the hands and feet were wounded, no vital part, such as the heart, was touched, and the victim often lingered long in his agony. There was great pain from the intense thirst, which is one of the greatest sufferings of the wounded on the field of battle.

Then the whole weight being thrown on the hands and arms produced such a painful stretch of the body, that the sufferer might use the words of the Psalmist and say, "All my bones are out of joint." All this ended in death; a body had God prepared for Jesus (Heb. x. 5), and

that body was broken and offered up to God as a sacrifice for sin. The offering was not completed until He became a corpse,—then his life was surrendered, his blood was shed, and DEATH, the direct penalty of the law, was fully borne. Nothing meets the case but a violent death, for this only insures the necessary qualities. It would not have done for Christ to have died as a suicide, nor by natural death, such as fever or pestilence, for neither of these would have had in them the elements of expiation for sin, viz., the shedding of innocent blood. Man seems hardly able to cement a treaty without blood, whether in war or sacrifice (Heb. ix. 16—23); so it was through the "blood of the everlasting covenant" that peace was effected between God

and sinful man (Col. i. 20; Heb. xiii. 20). As suffering is the chief element in an atonement, it is set forth in the greatest relief in Scripture. Its climax was when Christ shed his blood, or when his *death* took place (which on legal grounds was necessary to complete the sacrifice), and therefore the Scripture often links the remission of sins in a peculiar way with his voluntary death, and with the cleansing power of his shed blood. (Rom iii. 25; v. 9; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 20; Heb. ii. 14; 1 Peter i. 19; Rev. v. 9, etc.) For this reason the blood of Christ is often called the *price* of our redemption, *i. e.*, what it cost.

It is supposed that the immediate cause of Christ's death was literal rupture of the heart, brought on by

extremity of mental and bodily agony (Psa. lxix. 20). This accounts for his speedy and sudden death on the cross, and for the escape of the blood and water which issued from his side when gashed by the Roman soldier's spear.

There is something terrible in death! Speak ye who have wept over a firstborn child, and have shrunk back with mingled sorrow and fear from the ghastly stamp of the king of terrors, feeling "This is death!" The little child who went in early life to the temple at Jerusalem would never forget the impressions which the first sacrifice it saw would make upon its mind. The writhing victim, the bloody knife, the blazing altar would be graven upon its memory for ever. So the

very sight of Christ an actual corpse must have had a great effect on those who saw it, and could read the mystery. It was a wondrous fact, showing in the plainest manner God's character, the majesty and purity of his law, the guilt of man, and the sufficiency of the remedy.

How beautifully, how simply, and how forcibly is this truth brought before the believer in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, where he is reminded in the plainest manner of the broken body, the shed blood, and of the death of his Divine Redeemer!

The great oblation which Christ offered up to God was "HIMSELF," the agonies of his soul and body as a substitution for the sinner's doom. "He loved me and gave

Himself for me." Look at Him, ye thoughtless! the salvation comes to you—free, full, perfect; despise it not on that account; it is a great salvation; it is a difficult salvation,—Jesus Christ bought it with his sighs, his sweat, his tears, his blood; yea, with his own life. To create He had to speak; to redeem He had to suffer. O magnify his free grace, and while you take (as it is your privilege and duty) all the benefit, be careful that you give Him all the glory!

On the innocent suffering for the guilty.

57. As regards the justice of allowing an innocent person to suffer for the guilty we may remark—

That Christ had full disposal of his own life, and power to unite Himself to the human race if He saw fit:—

That in doing this He was a free

agent, and not compelled to do so:—

That the men who persecuted and crucified Him were free agents:—

That if God, as the Sovereign, Lawgiver, and Judge of the world, saw fit to accept Christ's death as a satisfaction for sin (all the rights and claims of justice being preserved) no wrong was done to any person or class of persons. Of course it is an expedient that in human affairs is very rarely, perhaps never desirable; but God is the supreme Lawgiver, and accountable to none; He has done all in the way of righteousness, and agreeably to the holy laws of his perfect nature. The essence of Christ's atonement consists in its being a free-will transaction; for had it been otherwise, it would have been

the greatest possible injustice to force a guiltless person to suffer for the guilty. Christ of his own free-will "suffered, the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. iii. 18). He had a right to exercise this self-denial; and as it was done by his free-will, no injustice was done to any one. If He had no right to make an atonement, He had no right to consult his own happiness; but we read, "for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. xii. 2).

Well may we, in reviewing these thoughts, use the Master's own words and say, "Thus it is written, and thus it BEHOVED Christ to suffer" (Luke xxiv. 46).

# APPENDIX TO PART IV.

I HAVE considered the subject of "Suffering," sufficiently in a general way, as one of the great elements which forms part of an atonement, and I hope that my labouring brother will be able to understand what I have written, if he reads it carefully and weighs the thoughts. But there are many other questions which reflection suggests under the head of suffering. They are difficult, and involve differences of opinion. I can hardly hope to follow out any new train of thought, but I do not wish to shrink from the difficulties of the subject. I offer the following remarks as suggestive efforts after truth, desiring not to be wise above what is written, nor to advance any point that may not be inferred from Holy Scripture.

58. The first question which arises is, Have we reason to believe from Scripture that reference was made in Christ's atonement on the cross to the sins of each one of us? In short, may we believe not merely that He atoned for sin in general, and offered a satisfaction to public justice, but that He atoned for our special sins in particular, and offered on our behalf a satisfaction to retributive justice? This is a personal question, and full of comfort, if it can be scripturally established, besides demonstrating that minute and exquisite perfection in the atonement which we observe in all God's works of creation. You require to know whether Christ is your personal Saviour, whether He bore your guilt, your sins, your punishment, and if you may trust to his payment of your debt, without any misgiving as to the claims of justice for arrears on your account. God grant that I may write wisely on these important points, to his glory and your comfort.

Were our individual sins laid on Christ.

59. A word here as to what was imputed to Christ, when He stood in our place. In submitting to suffering at all, Christ was undergoing the treatment due to a sinner, and the explanation of this mystery is that, by virtue of the principle of relationship, suretiship, or representation, Divine justice saw in Him *imputed guilt.* That He was charged with evil is quite clear from Isa. liii. 6; that it was connected with sin is quite clear, and therefore it must be either with Adam's sin, or with our sins; but many passages of Scripture represent Him as suffering for us, and therefore his sufferings must have had some connection with our sins.

What was imputed to Christ.

Now with regard to any person's sins, there is the sin *i. e.*, the wicked act itself; there is its guilt, or its blameworthiness, which consists in its being the violation of an obligation; and there is its punishment, or the evil which it has earned.

We believe that the *guilt* of our sins was imputed to Him, that He was debited with *our individual sins themselves*, and that He bare them (1 Pet. ii. 24), and not merely their *effects* or their punishment (Isa. liii. 5); thus God is represented (2 Cor. v. 19) as not imputing men's trespasses unto THEM; but they must be chargeable to some one, therefore God must of necessity impute them to some one else, viz., a surety, which is Christ. The sins are transferred, borne, expiated, and are as though they had never been (Jer. l. 20). The Scriptures seem to use language to this effect. We read in Isaiah liii. 4—6, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." * Take this last verse; it refers to

* "Made the iniquity of us all to meet on him."—Marginal reading.

every man's peculiar way of sinning. It implies not only that we are all sinners in general, that we partake what is called "original sin," but that each of us has turned to *his own way*, or has his individual guilt, and his peculiar forms of self-will, selfishness, and lust. This is as personal as it can be, for it deals with us as single persons. The remainder of the verse tells us that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"—the guilt of our sins, the actual personal transgressions, and the retributive punishment for them, which was wrung out of his holy soul.

How this might be done.

60. Are we required to explain how this was done? This is a great mystery; and, in the remarks which I add, I only offer a suggestion, as the result of reflection on the subject. We have said before that we believe in Christ's two natures—(the Divine nature and the human nature)—which are linked together by ONE Person. It is usual to look upon the human nature as that which suffered, and on the Divine nature as that which stamped *quality* on that suffering; but it may be suggested whether our Saviour, when in Gethsemane or on the cross, might not by a distinct act of his Divine will and of his omniscience, become *conscious* of all the sins of all men, and then at the same time, with that intellectual consciousness, might not the amount of mental agony (due to the sins in detail) be wrung out of the human nature, so that justice would receive an expiation for them in their sum, and in their details. This is only a suggestion, for the union of the two natures is a great and glorious mystery, into which we must not pry too curiously, for then the questions raised lead to speculative difficulties, and to the hindrance of faith rather than to personal profit, which was the end St. Paul kept before him in all things.

Another reason for believing that Christ atoned for special sins and not merely for sin in the abstract, is that the essence of all sins is the same, though their forms may be different. A person might rob and murder another, but selfishness, un-

belief, and disobedience lie at the root of the sin; and it is a breach of the general law of love, though its form may be special. Why should not Jesus in his death atone for the *guilt* of that sin, and bear its punishment, when an act of his knowledge would bring it, as it were, into connection with his atonement. The evil of a crime, say murder, exists I presume in its guilt; but the degree of its guilt or criminality varies as the measure of the broken moral *obligation* (obligation is that which binds; moral obligation is the binding force of moral law upon moral agents; moral government is the government of *motive* in opposition to that of force); and it is clear that all these are spiritual things, and that in the case of murder the essence of evil lies in the spiritual malice rather than in the formal act of taking up the knife to slay a man, which would be its special development in a given case. If these remarks be correct, they may give some insight as to the manner in which the spiritual nature of Christ might sustain some mysterious contact with the sins of the whole world (1 John ii. 2); and though we bow low before the glorious mystery of the incarnation, and dare not analyze the action of Christ's two natures, his two wills, and so forth, still we may safely affirm that a *Divine person* suffered for our salvation, and that the person who wept and sorrowed in Gethsemane, and expired on the cross, was the same who was in the beginning with God, and by whom all things were made (Col. i. 16—20). Nor must we forget under this point, the spiritual union which Christ may have had with his Church in the capacity of their representative. This much we know, that marriage and the membership of the body are faint shadows of Christ's mystical union with his Church, a union which may be beautifully symbolised by that of our soul and body (Eph. v. 29—32).

### THE AMOUNT OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

61. The AMOUNT of Christ's sufferings next demands our

The amount of Christ's sufferings.

humble and serious attention. The difficulty which perplexes us is this: we generally argue as if man was already sentenced to eternal death, and as if this eternal death was a measurable quantity,—therefore, as if this amount must be literally borne by our Surety. I think the word "eternal" perplexes us, and we sometimes are in a mist when we keep arguing about words, and are not able to grasp the thing signified. What eternity means we know not, and God's eternity is an absolute mystery to man. We say that it is an "omnipresent NOW," and has neither past nor future (and here we incidentally see the unity of truth, for this involves omniscience, and omniscience involves omnipresence); but our finite mind cannot grasp the ultimate idea. To us and for us eternity appears to be progressive duration; but this much, perhaps, we may venture to affirm, that eternal death is not a measurable quantity. Its essence is spiritual evil, but its special form is its duration, it is eternal, *i. e.*, final, or lasts for ever. That the *intensity* of its sorrows may be one of its features, would not present difficulties in our consideration of Christ's atonement, for we can readily believe that the *quality* or intensity of Christ's sufferings, from his holiness, his excellent nature, and his sensibility, would exceed those of any lost soul at any given epoch of eternity. Our difficulty lies in the idea of duration, but, as we before said, we do not see that duration was any part of the expressed threat or penalty of the moral law, as it was first stated. It would have been its inevitable consequence; but, though it threatened a penalty, it did not name duration; and while it did not hint at any hope or remedy, so neither did it forbid any, or by any positive clause exclude the expedient of an atonement, which it would have done had the word "eternal" been used in the first instance.

Furthermore we do not think that Christ literally suffered eternal death, nor that He went into hell (as the place of the torment of the damned, which would involve many contradic-

tions), but we believe that his body went into the grave, and that his soul went to the place of departed spirits. We believe that his sufferings absolutely finished when He expired on the cross. (See Luke xxiii. 43, 46; John xix. 30; Rom. vi. 9; Heb. ix. 26—28. As regards Psa. xvi. 10, the passage is also rendered "my body in the grave" (Acts xiii. 35), and "grave" or "Hades" may be taken as the natural meaning of the old English word "Hell" in our creeds.)

There are some who argue that Christ suffered eternal death, because He was Eternal, and that therefore all his acts were eternal. This appears to be an argument founded upon *words*, rather than things, besides apparently involving the Divine nature in direct suffering.

Having said so much as to what constitutes the nature and essence of eternal death, some might maintain that Christ in his human nature tasted the quality of that agony (*i. e.*, separation from God, contact with evil, etc.), and that the Divine nature stamped infinite value upon the temporary experiences of the finite nature. In this case we leave the idea of "exact amount of the legal penalty," and introduce the idea of *value*, which rather savours of "commutation." That the Divine nature did stamp value, and merit, and quality on the sacrifice is most true, as I shall shortly prove on its own grounds.

But on this view we have in effect strayed away from the idea of "eternal" (supposing eternal to represent duration), and have betaken ourselves to that of "infinite" (which is rather an idea of degree).

But in order not to shrink from a difficulty, let us consider another phase in our attempts to grasp a definite result. This turns upon the idea of "infinite," and is this not rather a word in our mouths than an appreciable idea? In our minds it is an idea known to us only by negatives. But to proceed: The number of the human race is definite, and not infinite; the number of their sins is definite, and not infinite (and therefore

might be borne in their sum), because the acts of the human mind must be finite and definite; but the *guilt* of any one sin was infinite, because the obligation to love and obey God was even as his nature and excellencies, and these were infinite, and therefore the guilt of rebelling against infinite goodness was infinite. Now since justice demands that there should be a proportion between a crime and its punishment (on the ground of equity), then the punishment due to man for his sin was infinite. But we must remember that the word "infinite" refers here to degree rather than duration, and depends upon the nature and person of God, whose character has qualified the crime. The plain question then is, Did Christ suffer a penalty, the degree of which was infinite and equal to the guilt or demerit of man's sin? We think that He did, and He may have done this as follows:

(1.) His human nature may have suffered and tasted death, and the Divine nature, by virtue of its union through one person, may have stamped infinite value upon these sufferings. Here the idea is value and quality rather than amount; but in this case the merit would equal the demerit.

This view does not represent Christ as actually bearing an infinite penalty, but that what He did bear—say all that created human nature could bear—became of infinite value from the dignity of his person. If the penalty of the law is to be considered as an external infliction (viz., sorrow, pain, and death) apart from degree and duration, then it is clear that He did bear the literal amount, and that his person, rank, and holiness would make the merit of such suffering fully equal to the demerit of man's sin. Adam's sin, though a finite act, was infinite in guilt, so Christ's death, though a finite act, was infinite in merit (considering his Divine person), so that the merit was absolutely equal—not to say superior to the demerit. If Christ's human nature was the sacrifice, the Divine nature would be the altar; and if the human nature was the gold, the

Divine nature was the temple which sanctified the gold (Matt. xxiii. 17, 19).

(2.) Again, as the question of the degree of man's sin arose from man aspiring to be God, so this is met by God condescending to be man, or the idea "infinite" is brought out under the idea of "reparation," with reference to the different ranks of beings. We say that the guilt of sin is infinite, considering the rank of the being against whom it is committed. But suppose that being (whose rank and excellencies have qualified the sin), suppose that he humbles himself to the lower level, and then bears the penalty of the law (supposing it be a definite amount), is not the idea of "infinite" brought out in connection with these relative ranks?

In this case the idea arrived at is that Christ's merit equals the demerit, from the intermediate distance between the ranks being in both cases the same; but this does not prove that Christ positively gave to retributive justice an infinite amount of suffering. In both these suppositions the actual *amount* of his sufferings must be considered as finite and definite, and borne only by the human nature (consisting of soul and body), though its moral value, quality, and merit were infinite.

Both these views, it must be remembered, most fully imply the absolute oneness of Christ's person, and that the human nature was linked to the Divine nature, through the medium of one indivisible person.

(3.) But there are some who may take the following view, and who support it as follows:—

Man's guilt, they say, is infinite because of the broken obligations; and as justice demands a proportion between the crime and its punishment, justice requires the infliction of an infinite penalty (infinite in degree, though not necessarily in duration, which does not enter into the case in the first instance). They argue that sin deserves an infinite pressure of wrath to be inflicted by God, or one act of his infinite mind. They ask how Christ's human nature, which was finite, could

support this, for to be appeased the wrath must be borne, *i.e.*, sensitively *felt* in its fulness, and thus they infer one of two conclusions, either that the human nature, by virtue of its mysterious union with the Divine nature, did support the infinite shock of one act of God's wrath on account of sin, and was crushed under it; or that Christ bore the infinite sensation in his Divine Person.

Let us examine this latter view, and the arguments by which it may be supported:

First, we would remark that we are naturally led to believe that the Divine NATURE is incapable of suffering, considered absolutely, for its perfections are infinite; it has no taint of evil or weakness, and its essence is incorruptible, indestructible, and immutable. Evil cannot assail God, for God cannot be tempted with evil (Jas. i. 13).

It is, however, admitted by all Christians that a DIVINE PERSON suffered for our salvation, and we are asked to explain what this means. Some might maintain that this would involve an action of that Person's will, of his consciousness, of his sensation, the Divine NATURE being all the while perfect in its mysterious fulness; to wit, eternal, infinite, unchangeable, and *impassibilis* (Art. I.)

In these remarks a careful distinction is drawn between the person and the nature, *i. e.*, the person might have certain sensations or experiences, the nature all the while being in its absolute and unblemished integrity.

But in these solemn and mysterious subjects, we must appeal to the Statute Book, all must be brought to the test of Scripture, for "whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." (Art. VI.)

In these thoughts we do no more than seek to arrive at the definite knowledge of what we receive without attempting an explanation of the mystery. The truth of the incarna-

tion as of the existence of God is a fact to be admired and adored, and not to be explained. In these depths human reason is a blind guide, and must prove its wisdom by humbly bowing before the infallible standard of Divine Revelation. Let us turn then to Phil. ii. 5—8, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." That all this is predicated of one and the same person is clear. He who was God, was made man. But his conduct in so doing is held up to our admiration: "He made Himself of no reputation." (Greek ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, He emptied Himself.) What did this involve? Not the curtailment of any Divine attribute, or the relinquishment of any part of the Divine nature, but the voluntary resigning, for a season, of the GLORY, HONOUR, and JOY which were the natural right of that Divine Person (John xvii. 5).

Again, let us refer to 2 Cor. viii. 9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Here Christ's self-denial is presented for our admiration and imitation. He was rich, but He (the same person) became poor for our sakes. What did He give up for our sakes? In what was there a real act of self-sacrifice? Of course none would argue that He gave up any of the essential properties of the Divine nature: He was always God, and his Divine nature was never impaired. He who hung on the cross was omnipotent and eternal; but is the glory and joy which belongs to the Divine nature so inseparable from it that for a purpose, or for a time, it could not be suspended? God the Father's love is represented as giving or sending his Son to die for us; this involved an act of self-denial on the Father's

part, else in what is his love proved, or what did it cost Him? The Son came from the Father's bosom, and this involved, one would suppose, a species of separation which had not existed hitherto. The union of the Divine nature, of the three distinct persons knit together by one nature and essence, is always one and the same; but could the felt joy of that union be suspended by consent? Something of this sort might have happened at that solemn moment on the cross when that Divine person uttered that heart-rending cry, and mourned over felt separation from God (Matt. xxvii. 46). His being forsaken of the Father referred not to any disunion of nature between the Divine persons, but to the withholding of that love and joy which naturally result from union with God.

I have already suggested that the mode in which Christ might bear the sins of the whole world (which implies some sort of relationship to us which it is hard to see how his finite human nature alone could sustain), might be through an act of will on the part of his omniscience, or Divine consciousness; and, some may suggest, might not that very intellectual consciousness contain in itself the element of felt sorrow, and if so, the question is solved, and the infinite penalty of the law borne.

Furthermore, if we study Heb. i. 2, 3, we see the Divine Personality of Him who by Himself purged our sins strongly set forth; and in the same epistle (Heb. ix. 14) we learn that it was "through the Eternal Spirit" that Christ offered Himself up as a spotless sacrifice to God.

One thing is certain, that an influence or quality was imparted to the sufferings by the Person who suffered; for all admit that a *Divine Person* bore our sins and their punishment. If then a Divine *Person* suffered, might not his sufferings be infinite? and this without any reflection on his nature. What do we mean by a *Person?* A separate and distinct individuality and consciousness, so that that being wills, thinks, acts,

by virtue of his own consciousness, which makes Him Himself. We believe that there are three persons in one godhead. The essence, the nature of the godhead is One; in it there are three persons, each possessing a will, a consciousness, and a power of action, but from the infinite perfection of their nature (physical and moral) there is an absolute unity of will and purpose. They are not one in the same sense that they are three, and they are not three in the same sense that they are one, and therefore the Trinity, though a glorious and unapproachable mystery, is not a contradiction. Now this godhead is represented in Scripture as concurring in the work of man's Redemption, and Salvation is set forth as the greatest of mysteries and the most sublime of all God's works (Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. iii. 4, 9).

The Father *gave* the Son, this implies *Love* on the Father's part, which Love is proved in this act of self-sacrifice (1 John iv. 9, 10): the person of the Son comes down from heaven, though in his natural omnipresence He is there and everywhere (John iii. 13): and the Holy Spirit applies Christ's work to the sinner and helps his infirmities (Rom. viii. 26). All this implies effort and self-sacrifice on the part of God for man, and salvation is always represented as the most sublime act of love, as an act of the purest self-denial for the good of others that can be conceived, and therefore a source of infinite happiness to God himself. In this way do we gauge and appreciate God's love.

Of course, Christ must take human nature to fulfil the conditions of relationship, reparation, obedience, sorrow, and death; but the point suggested is, how far the Divine consciousness might act concurrently with the human soul, so that the PERSON might bear one act of God's wrath (which was infinite from his nature, and equal to the demerit of sin), and which one *felt* sensation would fully satisfy justice and be a literal bearing of the absolute penalty in all its length and breadth. Then would Christ's sorrow be infinite (not as

regards duration, nor only as regards value, but as regards degree and amount), and it would satisfy the claim of the law, which required an infinite sorrow, in proportion to man's sin, the guilt of which was infinite, because committed against an infinite God of infinite excellence, whom man was bound to love and obey to the utmost extent of his finite nature.

The object of these remarks is to study a personal question; viz., how far Christ did fully bear the actual amount due to man's sin, so that retributive justice asks for no more, and that we may feel assured of a full release through faith in Christ's person, obedience, death, and merits.

I do not see that the fact that Christ's sufferings were holy, and that the quality was more valuable than those of a sinner, affects the question, for Jesus stood in the sinner's place, bore the sinner's guilt and imputed sins, and therefore justice would simply require the penalty due to those sins to be borne. In this view hypotheses (1) and (2), pages 163, 164, are by no means excluded, but have their weight; for though they do not comprehend this last special suggestion, this last comprehends them.

Should this view be correct, we see how truth is bound up together as a unity, one part inferring another, for we then see the necessity of Christ's Divine nature, from the necessity of full Reparation, infinite Suffering, and of Merit (a point to be considered hereafter in its proper place).

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. "Without doubt great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh;" a DIVINE PERSON bore our sins, and suffered for our salvation; God the Father is well pleased, Divine justice is absolutely satisfied, so that to all who believe in Jesus is preached a free pardon, full and instant justification, and the free gift of eternal life.

These thoughts are indeed wonderful, and pass man's understanding, and we might well tremble lest we trespass on

things too deep for us; but still what can be more wonderful than the statements of Scripture itself (John xvii. 21—23; Rom. viii. 17), which, if uninspired, might be considered as bordering on blasphemy, from their astounding and sublime compass. At any rate we conclude that Christ suffered absolutely the penalty of the law, as regards kind, amount, and degree, so that there is no manner of commutation, nor process of "letting off," but that exact justice, having secured its absolute quittance, opens the prison to every prisoner who will avail of the release on the condition of its simple acceptance.

62. Christ has, by his atonement, given Divine justice a fuller satisfaction than it could receive from the punishment of the creature, albeit eternal. We have said that the degree of man's guilt was infinite, because it was committed against an infinite God, and therefore had incurred an infinite penalty. But how can a finite creature suffer an infinite penalty? He cannot do it; he can only attempt to equal the degree or quality by the quantity or duration. But this he can never do; he is, therefore, a debtor to eternal suffering; always, as it were, endeavouring to liquidate the claims of a broken law, and yet never succeeding in the attempt. Justice is never satisfied, and therefore the prisoner is kept in perpetual suffering; for, if justice were once satisfied, the retributive suffering would come to an end. If the sinner could bear all his punishment, then his release would become not an act of pardon, but a matter of justice; supposing the amount actually paid. But this is a case which we need not argue, as in every point of view it is wholly impossible. Justice and the law are, therefore, gainers by Christ's suffering, for He has at one time borne the full shock and given an exact satisfaction, even an infinite one, to public and retributive justice. In short, God's justice and character are more glorified in the cross of Christ than in the eternal damnation of the wicked.

Justice is more satisfied with Christ's sufferings than with man's final punishment.

63. There is another theory at which we would glance: A small sect maintains that the extent of Christ's atonement is partial, and not general; that it was designed and made only for the elect, and not for all men. They hold that Christ suffered as much as was equivalent to the eternal damnation of all the elect (*i. e.*, the sufferings due to one, multiplied by the number of the elect); in short, that He gave to retributive justice the very amount of these sufferings; that He has thus bought them with a price, that they are his, that justice cannot demand payment twice, and that, therefore, their release is a matter of right, or a matter of absolute justice. Now this view has the merit of many a human theory; it is clear, it is intelligible, and in some points of view it is logical—logical on the premises of the limited extent of the atonement, a point which we shall briefly review forthwith, as also the question whether justice demands satisfaction twice for the same sins. In answer to this theory we reply that we must not consider merely what is logical, or adapted to the canons of human reason, but what is Scriptural (for which see section 64, infrà); that it is not reverent to treat Christ's sufferings as an arithmetical problem, and that the theory suggests its own refutation, being rather a play upon words than a truth based upon ideas. The number of the elect, it is admitted by all, are definite,—suppose them to be a million more, then Christ's sufferings would have had to have been increased in that ratio, which is a preposterous supposition; or, on the other hand, suppose their number reduced to one-half, then Christ would have suffered proportionately so much less than He did, which supposition is most dishonourable. If Christ could have suffered more or less than He did, his sufferings could not have been infinite; but his sufferings (let their amount be what it might, and which, probably, can be known to God alone) were infinite, therefore they could be neither less nor more than they were. This theory falls to the

Refutation of the theory of the amount of Christ's sufferings founded on "Particular Redemption."

ground, then, of itself, and much more so if its premises of limited atonement are proved invalid, which we are now prepared to combat on its merits.

### THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

64. The extent of the atonement next requires our consideration. In one word, was it meant for the whole world, or only for a portion of them, viz. the elect? Is it general or particular? Our space will not permit us to do more than briefly to sum up the reasons why we reject the doctrine of "particular redemption" and maintain that of "a general atonement."

The extent of the atonement.

(1.) Because many passages of Scripture taken in their natural context and plain meaning teach us that Christ died for the *whole world* or for *all men* (1 John ii. 2; John iii. 16, 17; Heb. ii. 9; Rom. xiv. 15; 1 Cor. viii. 11; 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 Tim. iv. 10).

(2.) Because the truth that Christ did die for the elect (which of course He did, both as regards God's sovereignty, his own special intention, and his ultimate success, John xvii. 6; Isa. liii. 10) does not *prove* that He did *not* die for all men. To affirm one thing does not *necessarily disprove* another. The statement that there are eight great planets does not necessarily *disprove* that there are seventy-one small ones. The statement implies that a peculiar relationship exists about the first, but it does not prove that no relationship at all exists with the others. It is in short a negative argument, and therefore no proof. What we want are not positive statements from Scripture that Christ did die for his sheep (John x. 15, 28), which none dispute, but positive statements that He *did not* die for the others, which would settle the argument at once. This argument should be weighed, for much stress is laid on all those positive passages such as John x. 15; Eph. v. 25—27, from which a negative is gratuitously inferred, and this in opposition to a hundred Scriptures which, to the

ordinary reader, declare the opposite, and which require to be explained away, often in a very illogical manner.

(3.) Particular redemption may be clear, logical (on its own merits), and intelligible; the question simply is, is it *scriptural*. Scripture announces two great parallel truths—God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. They *appear* to us at present to be in opposition, but in this matter we must exercise faith, as this apparent contradiction arises not from the truths themselves, but from our finite powers for understanding the truths. They stand like two great columns rising into the sky, but the arch uniting them is hidden in the clouds; so we must wait for the light of eternity for the full explanation of two mysterious yet parallel truths, which Scripture sets forth on every page, and which, if our reason cannot reconcile, our hearts nevertheless practically admit.

(4.) A strong argument with the advocates of particular redemption is, that if Christ died for all, and all are not saved, then Christ died in vain. This again is a fallacy. So far from this, if Christ died for all, and some reject Him, several solemn truths are thus cast into the most awful relief, viz., the innate evil of sin, the suicidal obstinacy of unbelief, and the justice of God. That passage of St. Paul, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16, is sufficient to prove this view. The preaching of Christ is a savour of death unto death to those who hear about their Saviour and wilfully reject Him. They crucify Him afresh, they trample under foot his blood; and how could they do this if He never died for them, or had no connection with them? (Heb. vi. 6; x. 29.) All these truths receive an awful emphasis from the cross of Christ, and give to the sin of man an intensity above that of devils; who, at least, have not rejected a proffered Saviour, or thrust from them the gift of pardon and eternal life.

(5.) Because sinners could not be condemned for disbelieving the gospel and rejecting a salvation which was never meant for them, and because they could then say, at the judg-

ment-seat of Christ, that He was not their Saviour, and had never died for them (Rom. xiv. 9—13; Col. i. 28).

(6.) Because particular redemption represents God as insincere in his invitations of grace. To prepare an entertainment with great cost for 100 people, and deliberately to issue invitations to 1000, is insincere on the part of the host, for he cannot *mean* or wish that all should accept. This view would be dishonourable to God, and is contrary to express Scriptures, one line of which outweighs all human reasonings (Isa. lv. 1; Luke xiv. 17; Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 17).

(7.) Because election does not infer reprobation. Election is a *definite act* of God's will, whereby He chooses so many to eternal life (John vi. 37; xvii. 11; Eph. i. 4; Rom. viii. 29); and reprobation means a definite act of God's will, whereby He sets apart so many to eternal death. Election may involve *præterition*, or leaving many in their sins without effectual grace; but a negative leaving the sinner in his own guilt, is different to a deliberate act of will. The act of will is exercised in election, in which God chooses and draws his people; but the wicked He leaves to eat the fruit of their own way, and to be filled with their own devices (Prov. i. 24—31). Therefore over the door of heaven may be written, "Free grace," and over that of hell, "Free will." This view of the subject is most wonderfully and concisely set forth in the two sentences (Matt. xxv. 34, 41): The kingdom is prepared for the righteous, before the foundation of the world, showing sovereign grace, without works; but the fire was prepared for the devil in the first instance, and the sinners who have obstinately resolved to be sharers of his rebellion, must now share his condemnation.

(8.) We believe that the atonement was intended for all mankind, because it is offered to all indiscriminately.

(9.) Because sinners are universally condemned for not accepting it.

(10.) Because if it is not for all, no one can know for whom it is intended, without direct revelation.

It appears to us that Christ's death has made all men SALVABLE,* *i. e.*, they may be saved (there is no hindrance on the part of God why they should not be saved), and has made atonement for all sins, except that of final unbelief, which is never finally committed until a man dies in a state of impenitence. We are thus enabled to preach the gospel to every man, at any time of his life, and to assure him that there is there and then, forgiveness for him with God, if he will accept it (2 Cor. vi. 2). As long as there is life there is hope. The sinner must believe the message that Christ died for his sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. xv. 3), (which is the gospel), on pain of eternal death if he does not believe (Mark xvi. 16; 1 John iii. 23; v. 10—12). These things being so, it would appear that we are each personally interested in Christ's atonement, that we have a right to cast ourselves upon Him with all our sins, and to feel that reference was made to them at Calvary, by Him who has for each individual full and plenteous redemption. This view is both full of comfort and a great check on sins of the heart.

I trust enough has been said to suggest a thought on the subject, and to lead you to the blessed assurance that Christ died for THEE; that thy sins were part of his load of imputed guilt; that if thou dost stretch forth thy hand and touch but the hem of his garment, the promise of the true God has gone forth, that heaven and earth may pass away, but that thou shalt be saved.

Let us illustrate the point once more:—

It appears to us that what omnipresence is in the natural world, such is Christ's atonement in the moral world. God is everywhere present; He is with us, and yet many of us feel not after Him (Acts xvii. 27). But if we seek Him we can

* "Salvation" appears to mean a deliverance from evil wrought out in a general way; "redemption" seems to include the said salvation in its successful contact with persons, with a special reference to a price paid, or the means of release, viz., the blood of Christ.

find Him, and He becomes as it were our individual and undivided God. He is never occupied, and we can engage his notice, as if no other beings existed and we alone engrossed his care. So Christ's atonement is commensurate with the human race, a sort of moral omnipresence, present to every man, and ready for his individual application, if he will lay hold of it by faith. I may consider the atonement as made for me. "He loved me, and gave himself for *me*" (Gal. ii. 20). Christ is my Saviour as much as if I were the only being on the earth, though, thank God, He has also been given to be the "SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." The view we have taken with regard to the extent of Christ's atonement appears to be borne out by the language of Scripture taken in its plain and natural meaning; it has been held by nearly the whole of Christendom, and is without doubt the view recognized by the Church of England.

### DOES DIVINE JUSTICE EVER RECEIVE SATISFACTION TWICE FOR HUMAN SINS?

65. Some may naturally ask the question, how it is that if Christ has atoned for all the sins of all men, sinners are in danger of perishing, and whether their condemnation would not be a second satisfaction to justice for sins for which Christ had already suffered, according to our previous remarks. According to our natural ideas justice does not require a debt to be paid twice over, and if a surety has paid a debt, then the debtor is allowed to go free. It must also not be forgotten that the natural ideas which we have of justice are part of the moral law (Rom. ii. 15), and were given to us by God, who at the first created man in his own moral image; whilst, therefore, we do not expect that all God's works will be brought down to the level of human reason, still we do not expect that our common ideas of justice will be contradicted.

Does justice receive satisfaction twice?

The question before us is, If Christ has really atoned for my sins, *i. e.*, paid my debt, why am I not necessarily released, but am still possibly in danger of condemnation?

We have already alluded to the theory which supposes the atonement to be a commercial transaction between the Father and the Son, in which Christ paid to retributive justice as much suffering as was equal to the damnation of all the elect, in which case, it is argued, he would demand their release, for on this supposition their sufferings would give a double satisfaction to justice, which would be unequal or unjust. If the premises were sound, this conclusion would also be sound, but we have examined this theory and found it incorrect, and therefore the inferences which are based on it are proved invalid likewise.

But again, our sins cannot be regarded as *bonâ fide* debts. When we use the word "debt," we are using a figure of speech, for though it is a fairly accurate representation of our sins in a general way, the figure must not be pressed to a mathematical nicety or the resemblance ceases. It may be suggested that Christ by his death has rendered all men salvable—that is, He has atoned for all their sins except one, viz., wilful and final rejection of Himself, the only means of redemption. We are justified in coming to a man at any time of his life (for while he lives the other sin is not yet finally committed), and we may preach to him a full salvation through a personal and related Saviour. There can be no atonement for the wilful sin of rejecting the only atonement possible. And this is no disparagement of it to say so, for if the only possible means, prepared with much cost and difficulty, be rejected, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, and the fault must not be charged to the excellent remedy which would have healed on application, but to the sinner who wilfully rejected the same. So long as a man remains in a state of unbelief and separation from Christ, all his other sins do, as it were, remain legible (John viii. 24) and not blotted out, but remain extant through the very action of that unbelief, which is the inwoven pervading sin of his life, though never actually tangible until his death. When he believes in Christ by a living faith, then being

one with Christ the sinner gets the benefit contained in the truths of identity, representation, and substitution, and is in the eye of the law viewed under his federal and representative head; he is therefore judicially pronounced guiltless, because all his sins have been atoned for by his surety.

But some might say, supposing the penalty of the law to be in the first instance temporal death, if Christ suffered this for us, why are we called upon to suffer it ourselves? Is not this paying justice twice? To this we answer, The sentence of death was passed upon all and must be executed, but its fearful consequences have been obviated. If the sinless surety was obliged to go through it, could the sinful members for whom He died escape it? If the head of the body had to die, the members must necessarily follow, and therefore die also. Our dissolution is necessary before we can be fashioned again (1 Cor. xv. 50). But Christ has changed the nature of death to the believer; it is now rather a legal form, and a passage to a better world; its sting was sin, and this He has taken away.

Through Christ every consolation is now offered us, even in our present sorrow, pain, or death; these trials are called "short" and "light," in contrast with the eternal weight of glory which Christ has purchased for us, which will outweigh all. But He has in effect abolished death (2 Tim. i. 10), and spoiled the grave (1 Cor. xv. 55—57). The triumph of death is now short and apparent rather than real, for Christ has bought for the human race the general resurrection of the body, which will be the proof of the abolition of death, and of victory over the grave (1 Cor. xv. 22; Phil. iii. 21; Heb. ii. 14).

66. There remains one more point for our consideration under the head of Suffering.

The penalty of rejecting the gospel.

We stated that we do not think that "eternal" death was the directly threatened penalty of the first law; but this we believe that it is the directly threatened penalty to those who reject the gospel (Mark xvi.

16): "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In the sentence pronounced by our Saviour (Matt. xxv. 41), there is a new and fearful clause, which contains the word "everlasting."

And this is the view which the Scripture sets before us (Ezek. xviii. 30; John iii. 19; xv. 24; xvi. 9). The condemnation is not so much that men have sinned, but that they reject the provision for redeeming them from their sin. The condemnation is the rejection of the light and of the free offer of salvation by grace, through faith; for the word that shall judge them in the last day is what Christ has spoken (John iii. 36; xii. 48). And how can this death be anything but eternal? There remaineth NO MORE sacrifice for sin (Heb. x. 26, 29). Even in Adam's case the necessary consequence of his sin would have been eternal death, without an external Saviour; how much less can those in hell be saved. They rejected a Saviour in a dispensation of grace; they allowed Christ to bleed for them on the cross, without one look of faith or love, although they were so deeply interested in his person and work. Will God offer them another Saviour? Does not this neglect intensify their guilt and claim a fearful arrear of vengeance? Will they cease sinning in hell amid sinners, where pardon is not offered? Could they? No. And if man's temporal sin wanted an infinite sacrifice, and could not possibly have healed itself, what can be found in heaven or earth to atone for the sin of those who rejected Christ's one offering of Himself once offered? The rejection of the only redemption possible must necessarily involve eternal ruin. God has been earnest and sincere, He has sent his Son to save us, He is ready to give his Holy Spirit to apply the work of Christ to our souls, to enlighten our understanding, and to touch our hearts; but with what feelings of wrath must He hereafter view those who were in this life too busy or too careless to attend to the things which belonged to their eternal peace; to these He can be nothing else but "a consuming

fire" (Heb. xii. 29). Alas! "how shall we escape if we *neglect* this GREAT SALVATION?" (Heb. ii. 3, xii. 25.)

(1.) One of the theories propounded at the present day is that Christ's life and obedience formed our atonement for sin, which by inference denies the true expiatory character of his sufferings, or that they had in them the elements of satisfaction for sin. It is true that Christ's sufferings and Christ's death may be regarded as acts of obedience with reference to the will of the Father; but, if this is part of the truth, does it follow that it is the whole truth? Is not truth, besides being simple, also manifold, and may not Christ's sufferings have been truly expiatory so far as justice and the law went, whilst they might concurrently be exemplary, obediential, and the perfecting a positive righteousness considered as a whole?

(2.) As some seem to consider that, when we speak of Christ giving up the glory and joy of heaven to accomplish man's redemption, that the sacrifice was not so great, so real, so costly as it is superficially represented, let us consider the subject more closely.

What is meant by Christ's laying aside his glory when He humbled Himself? The glory of anything is "its peculiar and transcendent excellency," and the definition of "excellency" is "good in a *great degree*, *i. e.*, excelling good." Thus, the glory of a horse is its strength, of a man his courage, of a woman her beauty, of the sun its light; and the glory of God lies in his nature and character. This is his essential glory; his own peculiar and transcendent excellencies, and these always exist, and are inseparable and inalienable. He is always great and good, omnipresent and holy. But the glory of God has a secondary meaning with reference to creation. It then means the outward manifestation of these excellencies, and the intelligent adoration due to Him from his creatures consequent thereon. E. G. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psa. xix. 1), they show that He is great, wise, omnipotent, eternal, and the creature who reads that mystic

scroll, and then with intelligence and love tells God his judgment of his works, is a worshipper, and shows forth his glory. (Psa. cxi. 2, 3; cxlv. 3, 5, 8, 17; cxlvii. 1, 5; Isaiah xii.) So the Christian is exhorted to show the peculiar and transcendent excellencies of his Master, by special graces; to wit, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and overcoming evil with good (Rom. xii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 18—25). Now Christ appears for a time to have given up the glory of heaven, *i. e.*, the worship and praises of angels, and the homage of a universe, and to have appeared in this world in a state of shame, without any of those marks of honour to which He had a right. "Honour" (whose opposite is shame) means a personal good given to us on account of some personal excellency. This is involved in the preceding; the only honour we can give God is our love and free-will praise, and this is the service of heaven (Rev. v. 9; xv. 3).

But we proceed to consider the last thing this Divine Person resigned for a time on our behalf,—we called it Joy. Joy is the sensation of soul under present good; it is the opposite of SORROW, and it is looked upon as one special emotion,—love, hope, gratitude, admiration,—being all summed up under the general term "Happiness;" but, so far as God is concerned, God IS love, and God's experience is infinite, unchangeable, supreme joy. (God's happiness may be expressed under the word Joy, for love is a moral, as well as an emotional quality, but joy is a felt emotion.)

Now, if the Divine PERSON did for a season forego the joy of heaven (John xvi. 28; xvii. 5), and submit to *sorrow* (which we have already suggested, page 146), this was in effect the *greatest sacrifice* He could make on our behalf, as well as the *only* sacrifice He could make. To develop the thought,—the dearest thing a moral being possesses is its happiness. This is true because GOOD IS GOOD, and happiness of itself and in itself is an ULTIMATE GOOD. This happiness resides in the emotions (with us they are so fleeting

and precarious that they are sometimes called "passions," which means short, sudden, violent mental emotions, or affections); when these emotions are made pure, intense, stable, this *is* happiness, and forms the moral, emotional, and spiritual happiness of heaven. This happiness, then, is in effect the *life* of the soul. When we are happy, *i. e.*, feel joy, we spiritually live: when we feel sorrow we taste spiritual death, and in accordance with this how often in the Scripture is "life" used as the simple synonym of happiness (Rev. xxi. 6), and death of misery! If, therefore, Christ resigned the felt joy of heaven (John xii. 27), we do assert that He made for us the *greatest* temporary sacrifice He could make, as well as the only one which, in the nature of things, it was possible for Him to make. Let us not then from ignorance undervalue his efforts and self-sacrifice on our behalf, but believing in the reality of his efforts, self-sacrifice, and sorrows, let us adore this Divine Person, who is rightfully worthy of our supreme love, gratitude, adoration, and worship.

After writing the above I have read Dean Alford's remarks on Phil. ii. 7, which I subjoin. "ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, He not only did not *enrich* Himself, but He emptied Himself—"exinanivit" (vulg.), He emptied Himself of the μορφὴ θεοῦ (not his *essential* glory, but its manifested possession; the glory which He had with the Father before the world began (John xvii. 5), and which He resumed at his glorification)."

(3.) After stating above that Christ delivers us from the guilt and punishment of our sin, we may also add that He delivers us from the *power* of sin through the inward action of his Holy Spirit, which is the free gift of God to us, but the direct first-fruits of Christ's most precious bloodshedding. "Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin, but if the Son makes us free, then we are free indeed" (John viii. 32—36).

(4.) The difficulty that meets us in pursuing these trains of reflection is that we use words without the ideas which belong to those words, and thus we think these subjects commonplace,

because we do not understand or feel them, allowing a trite word to supersede the mental idea. We need the assistance of God's Holy Spirit in our meditations, and we should reflect on these subjects until the mind is able with every word to take in its corresponding idea; and after this we must try to feel at the same time the corresponding emotion in the heart through the power of the Holy Ghost.

# PART V.

## HOLY SUFFERING.

67. I HAVE laid much stress on that point, which more than any other enters into the nature of atonement, viz., Suffering; but there is something connected with the required suffering which is most necessary for us to mark. The justice of God demands suffering, as due to the law and in order to make the balance equal, but mere suffering of itself is not enough. There are two sorts of suffering.

The required quality of suffering.

Suffering may be holy or unholy. The devils in hell suffer, but their sufferings are accompanied with blasphemy, rage, remorse, impatience, and hatred of God, so that each throb of pain only brings forth a fresh burst of anger, and they go on adding sin to sin, and increasing the vengeance due to their transgressions. Of what use then would such suffering as this be in the work of an atonement? It is plain that it could not cleanse its own sin, and how much less would it avail to cleanse the sin of others. Guilty blood would be more apt to stain than to cleanse, and here is one reason, among many others, why the blood of our fellow man would be a useless offering for our sin, for no man can redeem his brother, or

make agreement with God for him, for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever.

Shadowed in the law of Moses.

68. The law must have its penalty borne or else justice will always have a claim; but then the penalty must be borne holily and without any taint of sin, or else the penalty would become due for the taint of sin in the discharge of the penalty. We are now talking about the *quality* of the suffering. Atonement not only requires suffering but it must be holy suffering, for this has a moral quality and value. It is pure, and transparent, and alone able to meet the demands of an offended law. This truth was brought out in the types of the Old Testament. The

lamb that was selected to be a sacrifice was to be a male of the first year without blemish (Ex. xii. 5; Lev. xxii. 19—25; Mal. i. 8. 13, 14), signifying that nothing which was imperfect could be offered as a sacrifice to a Holy God. The same truth was taught with reference to the priests who offered the sacrifice. They had to change their raiment often, and to wash their feet and hands in the brazen laver outside the tabernacle every time that they came near to offer anything to God (Ex. xxx. 17—21).

He who would be our Saviour must be holy and without blemish.

Christ's body was holy

69. Consider, then, the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ. As regards his body, He was holy, and although

born of a sinful woman, He was, through the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, preserved from the taint of original sin (Luke i. 35). When He died He was in the bloom of manhood—about thirty-three years of age. His bones were full of marrow, and He had no natural disease or imperfection. As sin had nothing in Him (John xiv. 30), so neither could disease nor death bring Him low without his free-will, and therefore if He died it must be by a violent death at the hands of others. It is strange when we reflect on the penalties denounced against murder and the shedding of innocent blood, and perceive how that it was only by the shedding of *innocent blood* that our sins could be cleansed. Christ's persecutors, therefore, were guilty

of murder, although his death was the pre-determined counsel of God, illustrating the point to which we alluded (section 64, page 173), viz., the union of God's sovereignty with man's responsibility.

The life of Christ was holy.

70. Examine the acts of Christ's life, and you will find that what He did was always right and good. He never did what He ought not to have done, and He never left undone what He ought to have done. If the law required Him to come up to the Feast of the Passover at Jerusalem, He came, though He knew that death might be the consequence. But He never asked what the result might be; He left that to God; it was his part to do his duty. And so in all his actions towards men He never hurt nor

defrauded anybody, for He was harmless (Heb. vii. 26). His hands did much good, for they were open as day to melting charity, to relieve the sufferings of the poor, to open the eyes of the blind, or to give speech to the dumb. He never thought of Himself, or of what trouble He might suffer, but was always ready to DO GOOD whenever He had the opportunity; and it must be remembered that He was the only man who had ever done his duty perfectly since Adam ate of the forbidden fruit. Of all others it was true "that there was no man on earth that sinneth not" (1 Kings viii. 46; Psa. xiv. 1—3), all others had gone out of the right way, and done that which was evil in the sight of God. To know how good and

holy our Saviour was we have only to compare Him with his best servants. We call them holy men, but they were not really holy men in actual fact; they tried to be holy, and were far more so than the people among whom they lived. Christ was the only faultless person, and this Judas himself, who had known Him intimately for some years, was obliged to confess, and Pilate also acknowledged it, although fear and time-serving led him to condemn Jesus; so that, whilst Jesus was being outwardly treated as a reputed felon, God's providence multiplied testimonies to his real innocence. Abraham was a pattern of faith, yet he sinned from want of faith (Gen. xii. 11—13); Moses was a very meek man (Num. xii. 3), yet he sin-

ned from want of meekness (Num. xx. 10, 11); Job was a very patient man (Job ii. 10), yet he sinned from impatience (Job iii. 3); but we can find none of these flaws in Christ's character,—there all is pure and perfect, and free from the smallest taint of evil.

His words were all holy.

71. Further, let us glance at our Saviour's words, and we shall see his holiness brought out more and more. The apostle says, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (Jas. iii. 2). The tongue can no man tame, and therefore David prayed to God to set a watch on his mouth, and to keep the door of his lips (Psa. cxli. 3). Look how fast our words flow from us; without thinking we

utter foolish words which hurt the character of our neighbour, or repeat some evil tale (Prov. x. 19; xv. 4; xvii. 27; xviii. 6, 7, 21). How many thousands of our trials and sufferings spring from this little member! Ah! we do not want many words to convince us that we all sin with the tongue, and that is a solemn verse where it is written, "I say unto you that for every idle word that men speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment, for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. xii. 36, 37). Now in these points our Saviour never sinned once; He never spake unadvisedly with his lips, nor uttered one word which He would have wished

unsaid as He hung on the cross. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when He was reviled reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not" (1 Peter ii. 22, 23).

His thoughts were holy.

72. Furthermore, our Saviour was holy, even to his very thoughts. These are more difficult to rule than our words, because they chase each other so quickly through the heart, where no eye can trace them but God's. If you were to write out, for one day, the thoughts of the best man that ever lived, the record would be nothing but a sink of evil. Our motives are not only tainted with evil, but thoughts of blasphemy, lust, anger, selfishness crowd in upon us so suddenly that those who know anything of their

hearts know that our Saviour exactly described the human heart in the seventh chapter of Mark, verses 21 and 22. But it was not so with Jesus, his love to God was perfect. He loved Him with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. He loved his neighbour as himself, so that you might have sifted his very thoughts, but you would only have found how stainless they were, without the least shadow of evil or self.

Suffering a great test of holiness.

73. And we know what tries people most; it is pain. For example, a person might be beaten with a stick, wax very wroth and try to get another stick to return the blow; or when he was beaten he might remain full of patience, joy, and love. In this case these virtues would be greater, and of a higher

moral quality than if he had not been struck at all. Take our Saviour when He was on the cross, suffering such acute sufferings in body and in mind, yet his language towards God was "Thou art holy" (Psa. xxii. 3). His faith in God, his love to man, his patience, his self-denial, his disinterested benevolence, his humility, his constancy, his moral courage were then in their highest exaltation, and all his affections were regular and stainless even under the pressure of personal agony. The feelings of sorrow and fear were sensations of agony and evil; but they did not necessarily involve any moral evil in themselves,—they were the experience of evil wrung out of a holy soul in contact with evil; remorse and despair, terrible phases of men-

tal evil, which arise, not from the sentence of the law, but from the nature of sin and from the sinner himself, and are tinged with moral evil, from these Christ could not and did not suffer.

Consider, then, the *quality* of such sufferings as these in making part of an atonement. Christ suffered in his mind the throes of fear and sorrow, which united amounted to agony; yet his affections were regular and holy (1 Pet. i. 19; Heb. vii. 26, 27). His heart and mind were pure, though the personal experience of evil was being wrung out of Him. Such sufferings would be an offering of a sweet smelling savour to the offended law, and justice would pronounce itself more satisfied with this homage than it had been

outraged by man's sin. The death of this righteous man would be a greater tribute to the honour, purity, and majesty of the law than the condemnation of the wicked. The spotless agonies of a spotless soul may indeed (other conditions being fulfilled) possess sufficient efficacy to expiate sin.

Consider this thought carefully, and add to it the others which I have advanced before, as forming necessary parts of an atonement. This holy suffering has some quality in it that has moral value, and can touch the conscience and the heart; therefore the apostle may well say, after he has shown the worthlessness of the blood of bulls and goats, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit

offered Himself WITHOUT SPOT to God, purge your CONSCIENCE from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. ix. 14).

# PART VI.

## MERIT.

"Thou art worthy: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

Merit—what it is.

74. I PASS on to consider one of the most important elements in an atonement, and which I shall therefore place in as clear a light as possible. It is concerned with MERIT. Let us without further preface grapple with the subject.

What is the meaning of merit? It is much inwoven with the idea of justice, for it involves like being awarded to like, and the same to the same. The word merit, like many

others, may be used in a general and rather neutral sense, *i. e.*, you may merit or deserve good or evil. We take it in its more restricted and popular acceptance when it is generally used in a good sense. Merit then implies such good conduct as earns, as a matter of equity and right, another equal and corresponding good. The balances of justice are then equal. It is the sort of relationship between conduct and happiness as exists between cause and effect. In its highest sense it is a being so serving God that God is bound, as a matter of right, to reward him, *i. e.*, give him some good in return.

Opposed to duty.

75. Now the first idea of merit which we would expound is that merit is opposed to duty. Duty

is what a person ought to do, *i. e.*, is under an obligation to do. Supposing he does his duty, then he deserves no praise; but supposing he does it not, then he deserves great blame. Why is this? Because he OUGHT to do it, *i. e.*, there were such strong reasons which made its performance as it were a necessity, and its omission a great crime. For example, there is no merit in a child who loves its parents, but great wickedness in one who does not. Thus gratitude is a very small virtue (as the idea of justice enters so largely into it), but ingratitude is a very great crime. In merit, then, the idea of "*ought*" does not enter. The essence of real merit consists in its voluntariness, that is, we must of our own free will do some good

action which we were not morally obliged to do. It is doing a service to God which there was no obligation for us to render, and for which we claim a reward as a matter of right.

No creature can have merit.

76. It follows from these remarks that no creature can have merit before God. The creature is created under the pressure of infinite responsibilities, and is bound by the very law of his being to love and obey God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. What service can he render God? The service of Heaven or of Paradise is in one sense no service, for it is indeed "perfect freedom," and God is not benefited. So long as Adam dressed the Garden of Eden and abstained from eating the forbidden fruit, God was not profited,

and there was no merit nor thanks due to Adam. The reward he might receive was what free goodness had annexed to obedience. But when Adam sinned, then God was insulted and wronged, and Adam deserved blame and punishment. A creature can neither exceed his duty to God, nor can he in the nature of things render God any service which lays the Lord (as a matter of right) under an obligation to requite it with an equal good. When the creature has done all the things that are commanded him, he must say, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke xvii. 10). At the outset of his existence, his obligations outstrip his capacities, for his obligation to love and fear God for

bringing him out of nothing is infinite; how then can he ever exceed his duties? And suppose that one of us did keep the whole law and do our duty without one flaw; assuredly the justice of the lawgiver would be bound to reward us under the covenant of works, but it would profit ourselves only. We might earn a personal reward, but that would be all; it could never profit our brother one whit.

The remarks we have made with reference to men hold good equally with respect to angels, and we infer this important truth, that no creature can have merit with God; and from this line of argument we arrive at the glorious conclusion, that "Salvation is of the Lord," of whom and to whom and for whom are all things,

to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.

77. The case is, however, different with Christ, who is not a creature, but a Divine person. Christ is God, equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, independent, eternal, omnipotent, infinite. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. As such He was the Father's fellow (Zech. xiii. 7). He was free and above law, for the law was the expression of his will, and derived its sanctions from his authority. If, therefore, He humbled Himself and became a debtor to do the whole law, it was clearly a free-will act on his part, and one that had merit, *i. e.*, a claim for a reward from God.

Christ can have merit, being Divine.

Again, there was no *obligation* why Christ should interpose on man's behalf, and no necessity why He OUGHT to have done so. The covenant of redemption was a free-will transaction between the Father and the Son. "No man," He says, "taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself." While upon earth He acted as the Father's chosen servant; still his first engagement was made by his own free-will. This is a striking point, and one which renders the argument clear. We must remember that God's justice would have been glorified in man's condemnation, and that there was no necessity why Christ should interfere. This magnifies the grace of God, and is necessary to understand the merits of Christ. He might have sat on his

throne, and seen the human race perish without one shadow of reflection on his holiness and righteousness. What was it, then, which brought Him from his throne?—not the power of necessity, but the free-will power of his love. It was not obligation, nor any suspicion as to the equity of the law, had the final doom been executed; but the depth of our misery and the riches of his grace that brought Him from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost.

Christ's services to God.

78. I proceed to consider in what the merit of Christ consisted, and what was the good which He gave to God which claims another good from God in return.

In one word, the service which Christ rendered to God is this: He

sacrificed Himself in order to honour God's law, and to promote God's glory. The death of Christ has glorified God more than the praises of all the angels of heaven. Let us examine this more fully, so that we may understand what is one of the most important points in our present inquiry.

He has vindicated God's character and glorified his law.

79. Christ has shown the law of God in full action in the midst of a sinful world; this has done honour to the law, and wiped off the reproach which man's sin had cast upon the law. The character of the lawgiver is bound up with his law. His wisdom, goodness, holiness, and justice ought to be seen in every precept. The precept must be obeyed, and this sheds a lustre on the wisdom and goodness

of Him who gave the precept; but if the precept be not kept, it is like finding fault with the precept and the Giver of the precept. Now how shall it be most easily proved that the law is suited to those to whom it is given? By showing it in practice. How shall it be proved to be holy, just, and good if no one has ever kept it on earth? The slur which many transgressions have cast upon the law will be best effaced by an easy and honourable obedience. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than

much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb" (Psa. xix. 8—10); but this will be best proved if we can point to some one whose every action has been based upon the precept. None had kept the law since Adam fell, and it was treasuring up wrath against the sons of men. Its majesty would have been glorified in punishing, but the Judge would prefer that its nobility should also be seen in blessing and rewarding. Jesus refuted the calumnies of the wicked as to the bondage of the law and the restraints of obedience, for He said, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Though his test was obedience even unto death, still He felt that the commandments of the Lord were not grievous.

Moreover, the law received the homage of many new and beautiful graces, which had never been seen in action before, and whose nature was new. Bright virtues were made brighter by being brought into contact with evil. What a novelty was the grace of meekness! What a new sight was forgiveness of injuries and self-sacrifice for the good of others! Neither angels nor devils had seen this perfection before. This, then, is a service which Christ has rendered to God; He has wiped off any reproach to his law by showing it in action, and proving that the most self-sacrificing obedience is the truest wisdom. "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, whereby thy obedience has magnified the law and made it honourable."

80. Again, Christ has brought to light a new and most beautiful part of God's character, which completes the circle of the Divine attributes, and could not have been known but through Jesus—I allude to God's *grace*. This is the last phase of God's character disclosed to the world, and has given us a glorious insight into his most excellent nature. God was good; He showed this when He created the angels to be happy with Him, to see, and know, and love Him,—this was the first ray of knowledge for his creatures to learn about Him. In the lapse of time some of these bright spirits fell and sinned against God; He cast them out of heaven, and keeps them in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the Great

He developed a new attribute.

Day; then would the angels who did not sin sing praises to God and say, "Thou art just." This was another glimpse of God's character for his creatures to study. Man is next created: he is at first a proof of that same goodness; he sins; he then becomes a prey to justice, and the sword gleams over his head, hanging by a single hair. Who shall intercede for him? The Son of God steps from his throne, and cries, "Father, forgive them, and show forth thy GRACE, or that thou canst overcome evil with good."

Thou art worthy, O Christ, for thou wast slain, and hast brought to light the new attribute of God's grace, and taught the archangels the depths of God's excellencies, which they never could have conceived

before. Christ has enabled creation to know more of God, to love Him better, and to praise Him with more joyful lips. This was a good service rendered to the crown of heaven, for which Christ might well merit a reward (Eph. ii. 7).

He has given God the praises of a redeemed church.

81. Again: Christ has added to the number of God's subjects by reclaiming those who, but for Him, would have been servants of Satan and sin, and lost in hell. That those songs of praise are not wails of blasphemy is due to Christ alone; that that goodly band are not enemies, but, as it were, a new race of subjects to God, is due to Christ alone.

He has added to the happiness of the universe in having gained this victory over evil, which shall be fully

known in the day when He presents to his Father his bride, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but redeemed from sin, death, and hell, through his most precious blood.

O Lamb of God! Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, whereby Thou hast brought many sons and daughters unto glory, increased the family of God, and gotten the victory over the powers of evil.

God acknowledges Christ's merits.

82. Such is a hasty review of some of the services which Christ has conferred on the crown of heaven by his obedience unto death. It only remains for me to say that they are acknowledged by God the Father. "Ask of me," says He, addressing the Son, "and I shall give thee the heathen for

thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. ii. 8). Claim it from me as a right and I will acknowledge the demand. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, BECAUSE He hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. liii. 11, 12). The blood of the everlasting covenant demands its reward.

The Father promised to make the Son's work successful, to make Him as mediator, the glorified Head of the new creation, to give Him a ransomed church, and an appointed seed, even the chosen number of the elect. To us the salvation comes free as the sunshine, without money

and without price, but it is Christ's right as the second Adam. It is always true that eternal life is the gift of God to us, but it is the wages of Christ's obedience unto death.

Guilt is opposed to merit. Adam's sin was a temporal act of infinite guilt; Christ's death was a temporal act of infinite merit, the benefit of which shall endure for ever and ever. As the *time* of a sin has nothing to do with its merit or demerit, with its quality or guilt, so Christ wrought out his obedience unto death when He was upon earth eighteen centuries ago; but the *merit* of what He did lasts for ever, and therefore his righteousness may well be called everlasting (Psa. ciii. 17). The view we have taken of merit is taught us in Scripture (Phil. ii. 5—8).

"WHEREFORE" (*i. e.*, with reference to his previous obedience, and as an earned reward) "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9—11).

So again in the fifth chapter of Revelation the same phase is beautifully brought out. No man was found worthy to open the sealed book of prophecy; but the Lamb, who had been slain, was worthy of this peculiar honour, and then all heaven brake forth in an outburst of

praise in honour of his victorious merit.

I have endeavoured to explain the idea of merit, and why Christ can claim, and why we cannot claim, a reward. Without this point, all the others which we have considered would profit nothing in an atonement for human sin. How often do we see how one truth is bound up with another. We learn from this train of reflection, that our Saviour must be God, and that if Christ be not God "our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins." Without doubt great is the mystery of Godliness! God was manifest in the flesh! Accept this grand truth and how many others fall into their proper places, and show us that God's way of salvation is a consistent whole. It is

reasonable, honourable, capable of being understood by the head, admired and loved by the heart, and has an efficacy to purge even the conscience of the quaking sinner, so that he may have joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Ghost.

# PART VII.

## AUTHORIZATION.

"For HIM hath God the Father sealed."

The last point, Authorization.

83. I NOW pass on to the consideration of the last point necessary in an atonement for sin, which I will also express in one word—it is AUTHORIZATION. The meaning of this idea is that the person who undertakes to do a work has a right to do it, by having been appointed by lawful authority, and that his acts, therefore, will be recognized as official by legislative power. For this reason, persons do not

undertake to do great and public works solely at their own will, without a commission from some superior, in whom the right of appointing is vested.

For example, it is not every one who can be the English ambassador to another nation; he must have his papers signed by the Queen, and sealed with the Great Seal of England, to show who he is, and that he is allowed to represent his Sovereign at the foreign court; or if there is such a thing as a Congress, as there was at Vienna in 1815, or at Paris in our own time, it is not every one who has a right to go and sit at the table, take part in the council, and whose signature would be binding when attached to the parchment which contains the treaty. The

person must have been chosen by his Sovereign, and carries papers signed and sealed, as proofs of his commission, and it is this truth which gives value or quality to his actions as the representative of a nation or a crown; and, as he is supposed to act according to instructions, his acts will be acknowledged and approved of by his own government.

Suppose, for example, that you had been guilty of treason and rebellion, and that after your defeat the king or queen sent out trusty servants to proclaim pardon to all who gave up their arms within a certain time. You would desire to know whether this offer was genuine, and whether the person who made it had a *right* to do so; or else you

might not feel inclined to surrender, lest you should fall into a trap. You would therefore ask him to show you his authority for making this offer, and if he showed you his papers, in which you read the very terms of the pardon you had already heard, and if you recognized the Great Seal of England and the Queen's signature, you would feel satisfied that all was right, and that if you did lay down your arms a pardon would be granted at once by the Sovereign, especially if you knew that she always kept her word.

Christ has authority to act as a Saviour.

84. Now apply this to our Saviour: We wish to know that He is a properly appointed Saviour, that what He does He does with the highest sanction, that there is no danger of our being

deceived or rejected if we trust Him, but that his sufferings and death have all the merit in the eyes of God Himself, which they are said to have. This is a personal truth full of comfort to our own souls, and it is necessary to give full value to the thoughts which we have been already considering, for what use would there be in Christ's being made flesh if no one was sure whether God had appointed Him to do so, or what value would there be in his sufferings and death, if they had been done only of his own will, without the sanction of God the Father?

Thank God this truth is stated most clearly in the Word of God! All that Christ did when He came into the world was what had been arranged in the Eternal Covenant

between the Father and the Son before the world began (Eph. iii.).

The authority and person of the Father are therefore seen in the Son, and for this reason Christ said, "He that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke x. 16). St. Paul tells us plainly that this is so in the epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. v. 4—6), "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." So again we read, Heb. vii. 28, "For the law maketh men high priests which have in-

firmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

The same truth is set before us in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers, where Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up alive because they offered incense to God without being legally authorized to discharge an office which belonged only to the priests (Num. xvi. 40).

The Jews asked our Lord by what authority He acted as He did (Luke xx. 2). They were not wrong in wanting proofs of his work and mission, but in shutting their eyes to the numberless proofs which He gave them. (John x. 37, 38; xv. 24.) So He exhorts them (John vi. 27) "to labour for the

meat which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give you: for," He adds, in order to assure them that they ran no risk, but that all was legal and true—"for Him hath God the Father sealed." A seal is often the sign of authority; it is a stone cut in a certain way, whose signs have certain meanings. It is impressed on something soft, such as wax, on which it leaves its mark, or the ideas it was intended to convey. Suppose, for example, at the peace of Amiens, that the English ambassador has the treaty brought to him; he signs and seals it with a great seal. The question is what is the meaning of that? That seal is the symbol of the rank, authority, and consent of the British sovereign, and is the

pledge that he will abide by what is written therein. When Christ is represented as being sealed by God the Father, it means that He acts under the sanction and with the authority of God. The Bible represents believers as being sealed with the Holy Spirit, but this sealing is marking them and setting them apart, and differs in meaning from that which gives Christ an official authority to act in his Father's name. It was God who sent his Son into the world, yet the Son came freely, without any force; Christ laid down his life of his own free will; still it had respect unto the will of the Father, and became valid, legal, and efficacious by virtue of that will (John x. 17, 18). This truth should be a great comfort to us. God the

Father is the great King of the universe, the fountain of all law, and the Supreme Judge. What if Christ were a self-constituted Saviour, might we not have misgivings as to whether his work would do us good, and be accepted by the great Judge?

But we need not be troubled with these doubts, for every proof is given us in Scripture that Jesus is the Christ, that is, the Anointed Saviour (Acts x. 38), and duly set apart to his great work. God Himself on three occasions gave testimony to his mission (Matt. iii. 17; Luke ix. 35; John xii. 28), and spake with an audible voice, as He had only done once before in the history of the world, at Sinai (Exodus xx. 1; Deut. v. 22).

But Christ's commission dates

from eternity, when the blessed Trinity counselled the covenant of Redemption before the world began. Then God appointed Him to his office with an oath. "For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. vii. 21). God has installed Him in each of his offices; the Father has made Christ his great prophet, and anointed Him with the spirit of wisdom. God the Father has made Him the great High Priest with an oath, and anointed Him with the Holy Ghost, and God the Father has made Him a great King, and anointed Him with power, and set Him on his right hand.

The principle of "Authorization" is the last which enters into the one grand idea of an atonement. It is most important, as it gives effect to those which have gone before, and is well calculated to give "STRONG CONSOLATION to those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, which is Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. vi. 18; iii. 8).

# CONCLUSION.

85. It remains for us to review the various thoughts which we have expounded, and to show how they blend together into one glorious whole, and tend towards one grand result. To retrace our arguments— Recapitulation.

Unless the work of Jesus has God the Father's authorization, in vain would all the other items be present:

Unless there were merit, Christ's sufferings would have no atoning value; they might be exemplary, but could not be expiatory; unless the

suffering were holy, it would not have the required quality; unless the holy suffering were grafted on a reparative obedience, they would not satisfy exacting justice; but unless He were made man, He could not offer this reparative obedience, and the groundwork of the whole would disclose a flaw.

Again: Relationship of itself is profitless without Reparation; Reparation must go hand in hand with a general obedience; Obedience is profitless without the inwoven element of Suffering; Suffering is profitless unless its quality be holy; and the whole of these are profitless unless there be Merit, or that which claims a reward from God as a right; and even these are profitless unless God agrees to accept, and appoints the

Redeemer to the office of Saviour. But oh, if all these principles, which reason demands and the Bible sets forth, are found united, then we may justly speak of a "perfect Saviour," "a finished work," "an all-sufficient atonement," "a meritorious death," "an everlasting righteousness," and infuse a breadth of meaning into words which use has made so familiar that our minds fail to grasp the ideas they set forth!

May we not say, in reviewing all these particulars, that we have STRONG CONSOLATION, that this salvation has been so contrived as to meet the demands of justice, to satisfy the character and glory of God, the understanding of the creature, and, above all, to reach his conscience? Review these several points, and you will

admit that there is an efficiency in the blood of Christ to cleanse your conscience which you could not find in the blood of a goat or calf. The blood of the lamb might redden your body, but it could not reach your conscience; that is, it could not offer you that intelligent, reasonable, and moral ground for believing that it could take away sin. But the one offering of Christ does satisfy the understanding, the heart, and the conscience. It is the blood of a man, and therefore costly; not only is it the blood of a man,—it is holy or innocent blood; not only is the sufferer a holy man,—he is a Divine person; not only has he discharged my duties,—he has borne my sins. Surely in such a sacrifice our reason and conscience may dis-

cern an inherent power to cleanse us from our sins, to destroy them, and make them as though they had never been! Through this blood the church enters heaven "without sin," freed from its remembrance and shame, as well as from its effects or punishment. The sinner who realizes the divinity of Jesus, his perfect humanity, and his meritorious suffering may admit that his blood has moral power to purge the conscience; even as pure and white marble might be stained, and some chemical compound might be rubbed over it, and efface every stain, so can the blood of Christ purge away the guilt of our souls, and make our sins, which may have been red as the ingrained dye of scarlet, whiter than the driven snow.

86. Christ's work is perfect. Its perfection. What do we mean by saying anything is perfect? We mean that it is thoroughly adapted for the end for which it was designed, that it answers it perfectly, and cannot be improved. In other words, that no evil can be taken from it, and no good added to it. This, then, is the case with Christ's righteousness; and the best proof of the complete satisfaction which Christ made to Divine justice is seen in his own Resurrection from the dead; for, had the claims not been fully met, justice had for ever detained the Surety a prisoner in the tomb.

We know what the sunshine is; clever men, and several of them Englishmen, have taught us a great many strange and beautiful things

about it, that make us admire it more and more. How our heart bounds when we see that flood of light!—how bright, how full, how clear! Suppose that any one thought the noonday sunlight was not bright enough; you would think him rather silly. But, if he took upon himself to improve it, and lit ten thousand candles in order to give more light, you would probably say that he was mad. His labour would do no good, it would be thrown away, and not one more ray of light would he give, even in the few hundred yards over which he might extend his candles. You would tell him not to waste his time, money, or candles in doing anything so absurd. The sunlight cannot be improved, it will always

remain the same—so bright, so perfect, so free, and independent of man.

You would tell him to enjoy himself in the sunshine, which was God's free gift, and not to act like a fool in trying to do what he could not do, and what would make him an object of scorn to his fellows. But I will give you the thought in the language of the uninspired poet of human nature, who, we are proud to say, was an Englishman—

> "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
> To throw a perfume on the violet,
> To smooth the ice, or add another hue
> Unto the rainbow, or with taper light
> To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
> Is wasteful and ridiculous excess."

As for God, his way is perfect, and assuredly the chief of all his works ought to bear the stamp of his infinite perfection. Apply

this to Christ's atonement, to his work and life, and then you will be happy. It is so great, so full, so free, so perfect—just like the sun above us; and as the infant would be doing a vain thing to try to reach the sun on a ladder, in order to give it more taper light, so we are just as mad if we do not accept what the apostle calls "the GREAT salvation," but try to improve it by any of our own works.

Means whereby we lay hold of it.

87. We would offer a few words as to the means whereby we appropriate the benefit. Again we notice the action of justice and the resemblance which exists between the two Adams. This very justice, which appeared to be our enemy, is now our friend, and as rightfully claims our release if we are

united by faith to Christ, as it did our condemnation when we were found in the first Adam. If Adam's sin be imputed to his posterity (which is a fact), and has involved them in its consequences, it is equally just that Christ's righteousness should be imputed to his seed. We get the effects of Adam's sin from union with him, that is to say, each one is definitely related to Adam by a line of ancestors who, though forgotten and lost sight of, necessarily existed. We are related to him by carnal generation; so likewise union is a natural condition of our partaking Christ's benefit. But Christ is in heaven, and God forbid that we should hazard the idea of being united to Him according to the flesh. How then can

we?—it must be according to the Spirit. Union with Him is effected in our souls; the means whereby it is done is faith wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost. The members are thus united to their head. There is, however, a difference in the two cases; we trace our union with Adam through a long line of ancestors, but each one of us may be united to Christ immediately by a living faith. He is a present Saviour—present to us all, and each one must be in personal contact with the head. The only agent between Christ and the sinner's soul is God the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is the agent, Christ the object, faith the instrument and means, and salvation the end.

After this examination of Christ's

atonement, do we not appreciate the force and beauty of preaching salvation by grace and justification by faith? Here stands the work—so great, so free, so full; what more can we want? And now, after our exposition of this subject, let us enjoy its comfort, for it is practical and personal. "Christ made there by his one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world." Why should we not then trust Him? Why diminish his glory? Why seek to help Him in his own work, which He alone can do, has a right to do, and which God will allow Him only to do? Why seek to be our own Saviour, intercessor, or mediator? Nor need we seek for such among angels and saints, for

the reasonings we have given in various places are sufficient to demolish this refuge of lies, showing that none but Jesus Christ can avail the sinner.

Does not this view of the subject of itself disprove the blasphemous fiction of Purgatory, which would cast the greatest stain on the completeness and success of Christ's work upon the cross? Such a doctrine is a reproach to Christ, as it implies that He did not finish the work which He came to do, and it robs Him of the glory of offering a free, full, and instant salvation to the very uttermost, by making the sinner undergo so much agony, as it were, to supply a deficiency, or to do what the blood of Christ did not, or could not do towards the per-

fect accomplishment of man's salvation.

The salvation comes to us free, and its conditions are simple and easy; but it is a costly salvation, earned by Christ with his sweat, his tears, his blood, his life. To us it is free; this suits God's glory and our need. When Moses raised the brazen serpent on the pole, the condition of cure was simple and easy; but it was not the less wonderful nor successful on that account. It depended on the sufferer's eye, the member most easily moved in whatever position he might be, and with the least effort, even when the victim was at the last gasp; but the cure was certain, in order to show that "Salvation was of the Lord."

So in the Gospel: the woman

who had in vain sought relief from all the physicians of Judea received it immediately when she came to Jesus. Nor had she much to do,—she did but lay her finger on the hem of his garment, for she said, "If I may but TOUCH his garment, I shall be whole" (Matt. ix. 21). The means were simple and easy, but the result was not less glorious and certain. The slight touch of that finger gave her a blessing that fortunes could not purchase, viz., health.

Repentance not a ground of salvation.

88. Let us, in conclusion, consider some of the reasons by which men hope that they will be saved. Ask some persons how they hope to be saved, and they will reply, "we must repent." Now I hope that the re-

marks which I have made before on the atonement of Christ will show you at once that this plea will not suffice. What is repentance? We are taught that it is contrition for sin, confession of sin, and forsaking of sin. These are all very good and proper, but there is no element of atonement or expiation in this. Remember that without blood there is no remission of sins, and repentance is not atonement. You are in arrears with some tradesman,—you go and tell him that you are very sorry that you owe him so much, and you will take care that it does not happen again. Will this satisfy him? will he consider that this wipes out your old debt? No. What does he want? He wants the money you owe him; he says payment must be made;

then you will be clear, and your good resolves not to get behindhand with him again will be pleasant and lawful. So with our sins, telling God that we are sorry for them does not repair the breach, nor satisfy Divine justice, nor honour God's law. "Go and sin no more" is a very proper maxim for the sinner, but this does not undo the past. The law threatens and clamours for his punishment; nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ, and the atonement He has made, of which we have been speaking, can cleanse us from all sin. Remember, then, that repentance will not save us, though we cannot be saved without repentance.

Prayer.

89. Then there are others who, when asked how they hope to be saved, reply "by *prayer*;" to this

plea we may give the same answer as to the last. What is prayer? It is asking God for what we want. But this is not atonement for sin; this cannot satisfy Justice nor the broken law. Though it may be true that we cannot be saved *without* prayer, still it is equally true that we cannot be saved *by* prayer. To ask a person for pardon for the future is offering no atonement for the past. In prayer there is neither a life forfeited nor a life sacrificed, and therefore it can never be repeated too often, nor stated too plainly that prayer cannot save a soul. The only cause is the merits and death of Christ, and this St. Paul shows when he asks the question, "Who is he that condemneth?" and the answer is, "It is Christ that died" (Rom. viii. 34).

90. Again: there are others who, when asked how they must be saved, reply, "We must do all the good we can; we must do what is right." Yes, we must do what is right, but will this save us? It would if we really did all that was right and good, and did no evil. If we really kept the whole law of God, which says, "This do, and thou shalt live," then we should be saved by works, and not by grace. The very justice of God would be our friend, and plead for our reward as truly as it does for the punishment of the wicked. God Himself would be delighted to grant the reward; but observe, the obedience and the righteousness must be without one single flaw—without one jot or tittle of evil; if there is a speck, it is all

The discharge of our duty will not save us.

marred, and you reap punishment and not reward, for he who keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all,—not that we can offend in *one* point only, for if we offend in one point, sin is so intricate that we directly offend in many others also. But if you kept the law, you would, as we have proved before, have no merit; you would but deliver your own soul by your righteousness, and you could not redeem your brother, nor make agreement unto God for him. But can you argue the question? Are you so blind as to dare to set up this plea? Do you say that you are not a sinner? In this case you state that you are something peculiar out of the 900,000,000 of human beings at present on the earth, and that you

are an exception to the experience of the human race for more than 5000 years!

You cannot be so mad as to claim this distinction; you know you are no better than your fellows, and if you will only read your thoughts for one hour, and see the selfishness, vanity, pride, self-will, lust, and foolishness which glance through your heart, you will admit that you are a sinner, and therefore this plea fails.

The plea of doing no harm.

91. As to the common reason "of never doing any one any harm," I need not waste time over this. Because you have not killed some one, have you therefore loved God fully? Because you have not sinned like David, have you never sinned in thought? Because you

have kept from *doing* harm, as you call it, have you therefore *done all the good* you could? Because you say that you are free from the sins of commission, would that free you from the sins of omission? Both are deadly in the eye of the law; if you leave undone what you ought to have done, you are a debtor, even as if you had done what you ought not to have done. Well may we say, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." The condemnation in Matt. xxv. is founded on sins of omissions; they had not visited the sick, they had not fed the hungry and clothed the naked, which shows that God condemns neutrals, and loves those who are on his side and *do good*—who have

a faith which worketh by love. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, shows the necessity of justification by faith by proving both Jew and Gentile to be under sin (and there was no lack of proofs from the palace of Cæsar to the rabble in the amphitheatre), and so we insist on the free, full sufficiency of the atonement of Jesus Christ by convicting you as a sinner, and that by an appeal to your secret thoughts. If you deny this, it is because there is no light in you. The Word of God asserts it, and history and human experience throw a fearful light on the fact, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; there has been no exception made in your especial favour; but, thank God, there is no exception made to your being a free

partaker of the salvation which has been bought by Christ's precious blood.

The mercy of God.

92. One word more: Some say they trust to *the mercy of God*. This sounds well; but what do they mean? Do they mean that, do what they will, God will let them off at the last? But they forget that God's justice is equal to his mercy; they forget that justice has been satisfied only in the cross of Christ; they forget that mercy comes to us only through the death of Christ, and that it is no use expecting the mercy of God out of the appointed channel. If they do not now accept the mercy of God in Christ, they must fall under the action of Divine justice out of Christ, and therefore the mercy of God is not a safe plea, except

grounded upon Christ's righteousness and atonement, otherwise Christ would be dead in vain, and it would be asking God to save us without regard to the great work of his Son, which is the counsel of eternity and the triumph of Heaven.

The refutation of these pleas of the natural heart ought to be more clearly felt, if we have attentively weighed the previous reasonings on the perfection of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let me express a hope that it may please God to use these pages for the glory of that Saviour, and for the promotion of his truth. May the reader and writer find this "Great Atonement" a sure support on the bed of death, and rest upon it as the meritorious cause of a joyful

resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the three glorious persons of the undivided Godhead, who have wrought out man's redemption, be honour and praise, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

# APPENDIX.

## QUESTIONS ON THE FOREGOING FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

1. What is the subject of which we are treating, and the object of the author?
2. Mention two facts from Scripture to show the importance of the subject.
3. What is meant by an "atonement"?
4. State the causes which present difficulties in the way of an atonement?

5—7. Explain the nature of holiness, truth, and justice.

8 & 9. Which of the Divine attributes is principally concerned in the work of an atonement? How would you illustrate it?

10. Prove the difficulty of discovering the method of an atonement?
11. What is the first point necessary in an atonement?
12. What is the first requisite in a Saviour suitable for man?
13. Explain why the blood of animals could not take away sin.
14. Explain the principle of suretiship.
15. What does justice require of the nature that sinned?
16. Prove from Scripture that it behoved our Redeemer to be made man.
17. What rights and duties does the office of a kinsman involve?
18. Why did not Christ take upon Him the nature of angels?

19 & 20. Mention another great principle involved in the atonement, and show how it was set forth in the law of Moses.

21. Explain the word "vicarious."
22. Is there anything illegal in Christ being made man?
23. State clearly the doctrine of Christ's incarnation.
24. What does Reparation mean?
25. Of what two parts does it consist?
26. Draw a parallel between the two Adams.
27. What is the meaning of Reparation in kind?
28. Explain the motive of Adam's sin.
29. How did Christ restore the equal balance?
30. Prove that unbelief was the source of Adam's sin.
31. How was moral Reparation made for this?
32. What was the proof of Adam's sin?
33. When may a neutral act become wrong?
34. Give some reasons why God gave Adam that special commandment in Paradise.
35. What was the consequence of Adam's sin?
36. Explain the moral Reparation given by Christ.
37. Draw a parallel between the two temptations.
38. What is the meaning of Reparation in degree?
39. What relation is there between the Divine, the angelic, and the human natures?
40. If Christ had been made an angel, could He have accomplished man's salvation?
41. Would an angel being made man effect our salvation?
42. Why would not justice allow the Redeemer to become like Adam in Paradise?
43. Explain the requirements of justice for effecting the Redemption of man.
44. What truth does Reparation take for granted?
45. Show the necessity of Christ's positive obedience, as a debt due to the majesty of the law.
46. What is the chief element in an atonement for sin?
47 & 48. Prove this from the nature of the case and from that of justice.
49 & 50. Explain "penalty" and "satisfaction."

51. What is the penalty of the law?
52. Is spiritual death part of the direct penalty of the law?
53. State the case with reference to eternal death?
54. Is duration mentioned in the first covenant?
55. Explain the nature and causes of Christ's mental sufferings.
56. Describe his bodily sufferings.
57. Show that it was not unjust that the innocent should suffer for the guilty.
58 & 59. Have we reason to suppose that Christ atoned not merely for sin, but for the special sins of individuals?
60. Offer a suggestion as to how this might be effected.
61. What do we mean by the *amount* of Christ's sufferings? Give three explanations as to how Christ may have suffered an infinite penalty in his atonement for man's sin.
62. Prove that justice is more satisfied with Christ's sufferings than with the sinner's condemnation.
63. How would you refute the theory that Christ's sufferings were equal to those of the elect, and that having literally bought them, He claims their release as a matter of absolute justice?
64. State the arguments for the general extent of Christ's atonement.
65. If Christ suffered for our sins, and we are liable to condemnation, does not justice receive payment twice? Explain and refute this statement.
66. Show that the inevitable penalty for rejecting the gospel is eternal death.
67. What quality must suffering have that is to atone for sin?
68. How was this shadowed forth in the law of Moses?
69. Prove that Christ was holy in his body.
70. Prove that Christ was holy in his acts;
71. And in his words;
72. And in his thoughts.

73. Show that bearing suffering patiently is a great test of holiness.
74. What is the meaning of merit?
75. To what is it opposed?
76. Prove that no creature can have merit before God.
77. Explain how Christ can have merit.
78. State in one word the service which Christ rendered to God.
79. What was its first special feature?
80&81. State its second and third features.
82. In what way does the Father acknowledge the merits of the Son?
83. What is the last element in the idea of atonement?
84. Prove that this holds good with reference to our Saviour.
85. Recapitulate the various elements which constitute an atonement.
86. Explain the perfection of Christ's atonement.
87. By what means do we receive the benefits of Christ's death?
88. Prove that repentance is no ground of salvation.
89. Show that prayer alone cannot save us;
90. Nor the plea that we must do what is right;
91. Nor the plea that we have done no harm;
92. Nor the mercy of God, apart from the cross of Christ.

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## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The 'Six Sisters of the Valleys' will be read with interest by those who warm towards the Waldenses, and the documents referred to in the notes and introduction, will afford the reader every opportunity of verifying the correctness of the historical narrative."—*Athenæum.*

"The author has selected a tale connected with the Massacre of the Protestants in the Valleys of the Vaudois, about the year 1655, and he establishes his claim to authenticity as regards the leading historical facts, by giving chapter and verse from well established books; the plot is founded upon a very singular fact, which, from its wondrous originality and patriarchal beauty, must enlist the interest of the feeling and the virtuous. There were six brothers named Prins, who married six sisters, and all of them had numbers of children, and they lived together at a farm in the mountains of Piedmont, without having ever made any division of their property, and without the slightest discord having ever been observed in the family. It was composed of more than forty persons, each of whom had his own department of labour; some in the work of the vineyards and cultivation of the fields, others in the care of the meadows or in that of the flocks. The eldest of the brothers and his wife, who was also the eldest of the sisters, were like the father and mother of the whole party."—*Observer.*

"Whatever there is of fiction in the volumes is of very subordinate importance, and is only introduced for the purpose of giving greater artistic effect to the story. It is a work full of historical interest, while it has all the attractions of a romance. The graphic pictures of Popery, with which we are presented in the pages of 'The Six Sisters,' ought not to be lost on the Protestant people of these realms, and as the Church of Rome is making such resolute and, we regret to add, successful aggression on our Protestant territory in Great Britain, we trust that, were it for that reason only, Mr. Bramley-Moore's book will have a wide circulation."—*Morning Advertiser.*

"The 'Six Sisters of the Valleys' is an anomaly in the library, for although an historical romance, it is characterised by the remarkable extent to which the author has carried a license often used by the writers of similar works, but never that we remember to the same extent. We do not mean that he indulges the claim of fiction to alter and idealize his subject matter, but the very reverse; he uses fiction only so far as it pleases him, following the authentic records with a rigidity almost unknown to romance, and not scrupling to import into his context whole chapters of pure unadulterated history."—*Lincolnshire Chronicle.*

'We are at a loss to determine whether we ought to prefer the historical research this deeply interesting romance manifests, or the cleverness with which its striking details are woven together and completed. Mr. Bramley-Moore has managed to give many of the incidents of those times of trial a new and more deeply interesting direction, whilst combining fact with fiction, so as more forcibly to impress the minds with, and direct the energies of his readers, to the conviction of the necessity of firmly and consistently contending for the faith of pure and uncontaminated Christianity. The great charm, however, of the romance is its quiet unobtrusive purpose of maintaining the cause of truth and holiness, whilst the bitter hatred and cruel persecution of the Romanist invaders of the rights and privileges of the Vaudois, are rather stated upon unquestionable authority, than held up to scorn and execration. In whatever point of view, therefore, we examine Mr. Bramley-Moore's well considered and completed tale, we may pronounce it to be as remarkable for the exposition of talent, as it is for the manifestation of judgment and good taste."—*Bell's Weekly Messenger.*

"Mr. Bramley-Moore has visited the Waldenses in their Alpine homes, and instead of writing a book to tell us what he saw, that a hundred before him had seen and described, he has employed the impressions of his visit in the illustration of an eventful period in the past of the Vaudois, that is to say, he has written an historical romance founded upon uncontrovertible facts, and he has checked his gleanings from dusty tomes, by the evidence of his own eyes. The result is a book which will be widely read and generally admired. It has a strange dramatic interest of its own; we may not always exactly concur with the author, but we can never shut our eyes to his great power."—*Morning Herald.*

"Anglicans will find much in Mr. Bramley-Moore's book to confirm them in their faith, to make them more thankful for the blessings of the English Reformation, to nerve them in resistance to the encroachments of Rome. They will find also that the volumes have all the fascination of a romance, that this fascination is intensified by the consciousness of the reality of the scenes and the incidents, and that the whole is the work of one who has been among, and has studied the people of whose ancestors he has written."—*The Standard.*

## NOTICES OF THE PRESS—*continued.*

"The plot is well conceived and executed—the characters are forcibly pourtrayed—the dialogue suggestive and scholarly, and, as a whole, 'The Six Sisters of the Valleys' will meet with a wide range of intelligent readers and admirers."—*The Liverpool Albion.*

"Mr. Bramley-Moore has constructed a tale of great interest, and beauty, and power, and has devoted it to the service of religious truth. For literal adherence to truth, for skill in the use of the materials ready to his hand, for the clear graphic way in which he represents the fidelity of the persecuted on the one hand, and the vices of their persecutors on the other, he deserves high praise. We know no book in which is more faithfully pourtrayed that memorable period in Waldensian history. We trust this tale may soon be reproduced in a popular form, and circulated through the length and breadth of the land. The book ought to become a classic, for the theme is elevated, and the language worthy of the theme. Our author needs no apology, for he has written a religious novel, which cannot but do good service, especially in these days of indifferentism to the cause of religious truth. We heartily congratulate him on his success. The work is got up in the most attractive manner, and the many illustrations with which it is adorned, drawn by Nicholson and engraved by Sheeres, are really of a very superior character."—*Buck's Herald.*

"This historical romance, indeed, is a story filled with well wrought pictures, which are drawn from incontrovertible facts. It is a work well worthy of a world-wide success, and we predict it will obtain it."—*City Press.*

"Mr. Bramley-Moore's work is an historical romance, but a romance unusually close to history. Much of the story is powerfully, and much pathetically told."—*The Press.*

"The work has substantial merits to recommend it, and is an able contribution to the imaginative literature of our time. The story is highly romantic in all its details; the author is fertile in resources; he has compiled his materials from documents not easily accessible, and through the thin veil of fiction we can read the events of one of the blackest pages in the history of our race."—*Liverpool Daily Courier.*

"It is a most seasonable production at the present time, and although some may look upon it with disfavour, we predict that it will be the means of doing good; that it will become a popular book, and one that will strengthen Protestants in the faith, for which many of our early reformers were burned at the stake. 'The Six Sisters of the Valleys' deserves a widely extended circulation, for a two-fold reason, the object it has in view, namely, the spread of Gospel Truth, and for its literary merits. It is a production replete with word pictures, some of which have been very happily illustrated by the pencil of the artist. It must be read to be fully appreciated."—*Buckinghamshire Advertiser.*

"The author seems to have taken great pains with his facts."—*Illustrated London News.*

"A really good book of fiction."—*Illustrated News of the World.*

"The author writes with strong feeling, but still with great care as to facts."—*Daily News.*

"This story contains much valuable information about the dark deeds of Rome in 1655."—*Protestant Alliance.*

"The book shows much historical research on Mr. Bramley-Moore's part."—*John Bull.*

"A work written in such a spirit needs no commendation of ours. Enough to say that it echoes the strains of Milton's noble sonnet, composed on the occasion of these very massacres."—*Sunday at Home.*

"We have said enough to recommend Mr. Bramley-Moore's beautiful volume to the attention of our readers. Whether we regard the pure spirit of Christian faith which animates the writer, or the noble principles of Protestant truth which guide his pen, we can award no cold or stinted admiration of this attempt to immortalize the patience of the Vaudois Martyrs, and to illustrate the tendencies of Popery. The author has consecrated no ordinary ability as a calm investigator of history, and no common powers of graphic description to the accomplishment of a work which is designed to please the fancy only that it may instruct the intellect and sanctify the heart."—*The Record.*

"Mr. Bramley-Moore has compiled his work with the greatest care; his delineations are abundantly sustained by his authorities."—*The Patriot.*

"As a romance, in the ordinary sense of the word, this work is likely to be interesting to a very large class of readers."—*Clerical Journal.*

"A book like this might very fairly be criticised from two stand points: firstly, as a romance, and, secondly, as a historical contribution under the garb of fiction to the literature of Protestant Christianity. Looking at the work as a romance, we have implied that it possesses many of the requisites of a highly popular story, and such we doubt not it will become. But the 'Six Sisters of the Valleys' has far higher claims upon our attention than any which it may merit as a historical romance. We thank Mr. Bramley-Moore heartily for the noble defence of Protestant principles which is contained incidently in these volumes of fiction. On many minds we can well conceive that the defence will have a deeper influence from being conveyed in so fascinating a form. 'Some men,' says Lord Bacon, 'will not so much as look on truth herself unless they see her elegantly dressed.' This may be a weakness, but it behoves us to accept it as a fact; and he who possesses the art of dressing Truth as elegantly as the author of these volumes has done, deserves our best thanks for his labour."—*The St. James's Chronicle.*

"We urge our readers to do what they can to give the book circulation."—*British Quarterly Review.*

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